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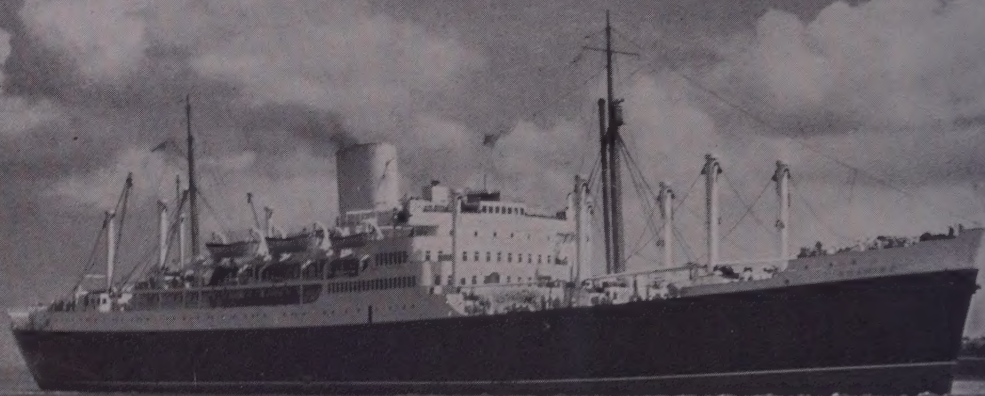
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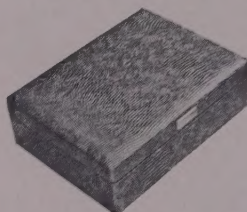
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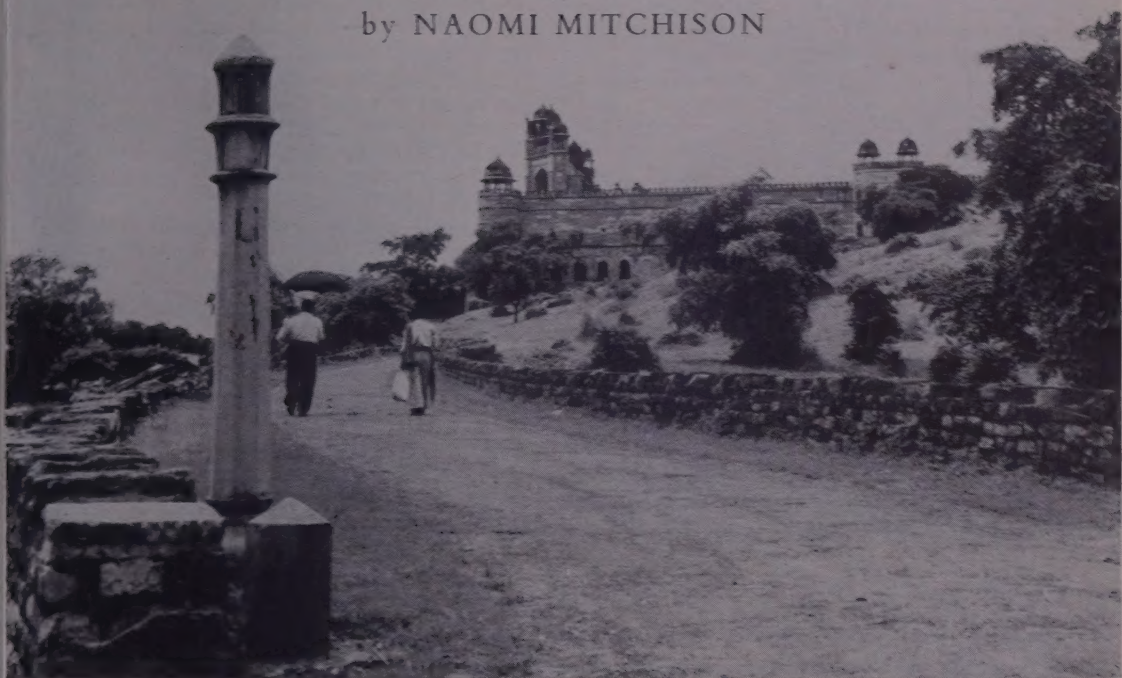


THE HOUSE OF STATE EXPRESS, 210 PICCADILLY, LONDON, W.1.

Fatehpur Sikri

City of the Angry Young Man

by NAOMI MITCHISON



Associated Press Photos, Delhi

(Above) The eastern approach to the Great Mosque at Fatehpur Sikri, surmounting its hill-top

Of more than thirty books which Mrs Mitchison has written, many have displayed her exceptional talent for recreating a different environment of time and place. In what mood did Akbar, the contemporary of our first Queen Elizabeth, build his new city? Here is her answer, which affords a fascinating comparison with the account of the newest Indian city given elsewhere in this number

"Do not take a guide," my Indian friends had said, "you will want to look for a long time. It is a very curious architecture." How right they were! Indian guides licensed by the Government are often well informed but perhaps feel that it isn't worth taking too much trouble, since what one says to tourists goes in at one ear and out at the other. And when it comes to dates, what is one century rather than another? They know that most of those whom they take round would rather have scandalous or romantic stories of queens and paramours.

Yet the story of the building of Fatehpur Sikri, Akbar's city, is much more exciting than the stories of Akbar's loves and murders. Before 1569 it was only a small village built of baked mud and canes, like thousands of Indian villages today, among them the

villages that still cling around the ancient walls. But a saint lived here among the rocks on the outskirts of the village, as saints still live in similar places, isolated with some aspect of God in the middle of the non-privacy of India and occasionally working miracles to the satisfaction of their disciples.

At that time the Emperor Akbar, a young man in his middle twenties, was an Angry Young Man. This was not for 20th-century reasons but because he had experienced betrayal, hate and violence; because he had experienced moments of profound illumination but then, as is its way, the illumination was suddenly cut off; because he loved poetry and yet himself was illiterate; because he scarcely slept and his main food was sweets and fruit often washed down in wine doctored with opium; and partly perhaps because he

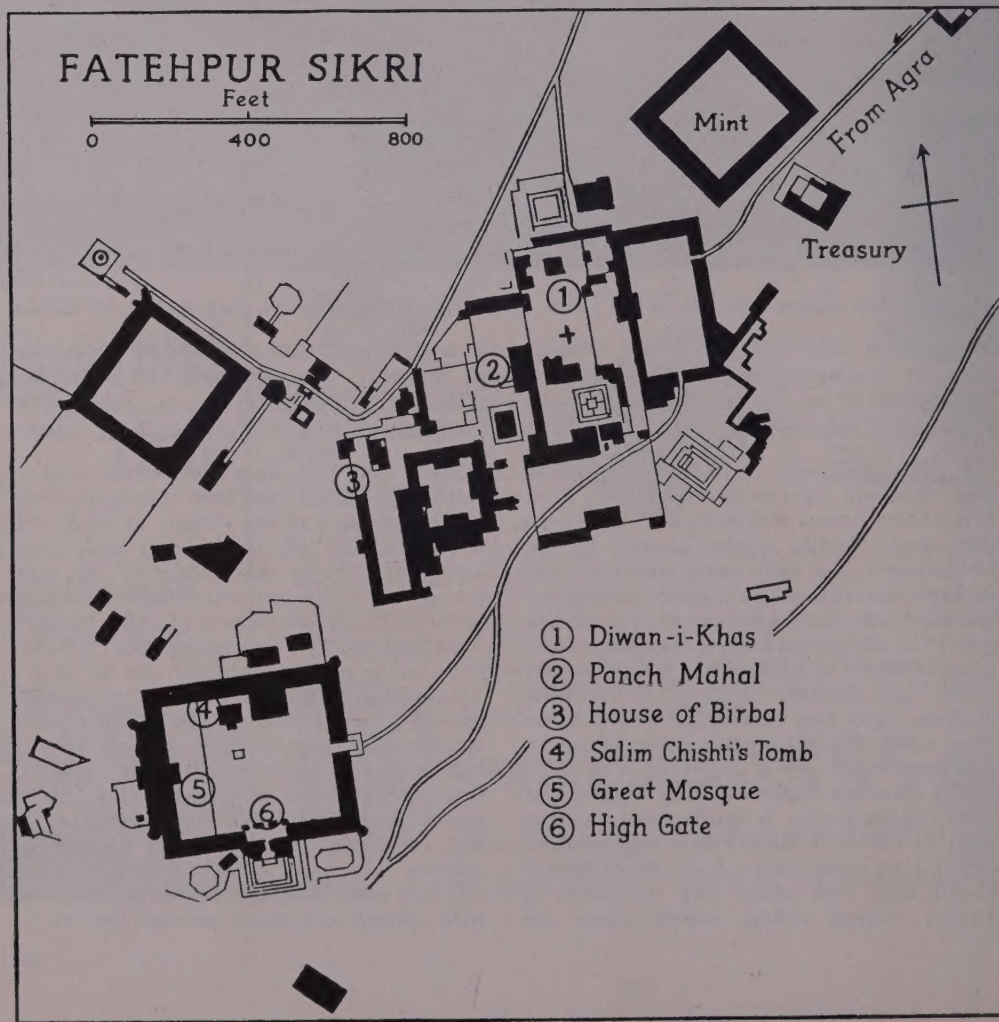
was pulled three ways at once, by his furious ancestors Timur and Jenghiz Khan, but also by the India of the Rajputs whom he conquered and loved and the other India of Asoka, the Emperor who became a monk, which is perhaps the enduring India. The anger of the young which is only frustrated energy forced him always to action. His twin baby sons had died at Agra; he began to hate the city. When the saint of Sikri, Shaikh Salim Chishti, prophesied that other sons would be born to him he sent his pregnant queens to Sikri and sons were duly born. Then in a passion of energy he set to building a city which is still not ruined.

It took fourteen years to build and one can see it is no haphazard, mediaeval growth like the towns of Europe in that same century—London and Paris with their narrow twisted streets and casual water-supplies—but a piece of magnificent town-planning. The

walls of Fatehpur Sikri are strongly parallel or at right angles to one another, with comparatively wide spaces between. Everything on the upper part of the hill is planned on an axis. All noble hill-tops, from the Temple of Jerusalem to Edinburgh Castle, have been partly levelled; this is no exception. It is only when the rock-slope makes this plan quite impossible that a few buildings and courtyards are set on a slope. Yet the road up from the gate in the outer wall must have curved; and, between this wall and the city itself, there must have been a picturesque and unplanned profusion of lanes and houses as in almost any Indian city of today.

Part of that sense of planning remains to strike even the casual tourist. As one approaches from Agra one is struck first and immediately by the acropolis situation, the sudden hill-top overlooking the whole plain. But what about water? The answer was an

The position of Fatehpur Sikri is shown on the map on page 402





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The majestic High Gate (176 feet from the ground), also called Gate of Victory, is one of two entrances to the Great Mosque at Fatehpur Sikri. Persian in general form, with simple carving and discreet inlaying of white marble, it finely coordinates structural and decorative elements

artificial lake six miles long. But that has dwindled and dried away, there are only some rather terrifying green-scummed tanks. How was water brought up from the lake? It seemed clear at the time of the Archaeological Survey of India, in the last quarter of the 19th century, that the water was drawn up by a series of Persian wheels and reservoirs. A Persian wheel, still used in many parts of the East, is the type in which oxen, buffaloes or what-have-you turn a beam which by means of a wooden cogged wheel lifts an endless chain of buckets; the greater the power of the beam the higher the lift—so long as the wooden parts will stand the strain. This way the water was lifted to a reservoir near Birbal's little palace, from which it flowed out through all the conduits and baths. All this might be more difficult to trace now and, alas, some of the decoration and detail shown in the fading photographs in the Survey have now gone.

One can still see the remains of the underground reservoirs, though most of them are dry and uninviting. These tanks, or *baolis*, had steps down to them, but water could also

be drawn up by pulleys. There are rooms on the lowest level, gloomy-looking today, but one can imagine, with an effort, that they must have been cool and delightful when the tanks were lapping with clean water, and when the blaze of sun above would send one down, in the heat of the day, to cushioned and music'd shade.

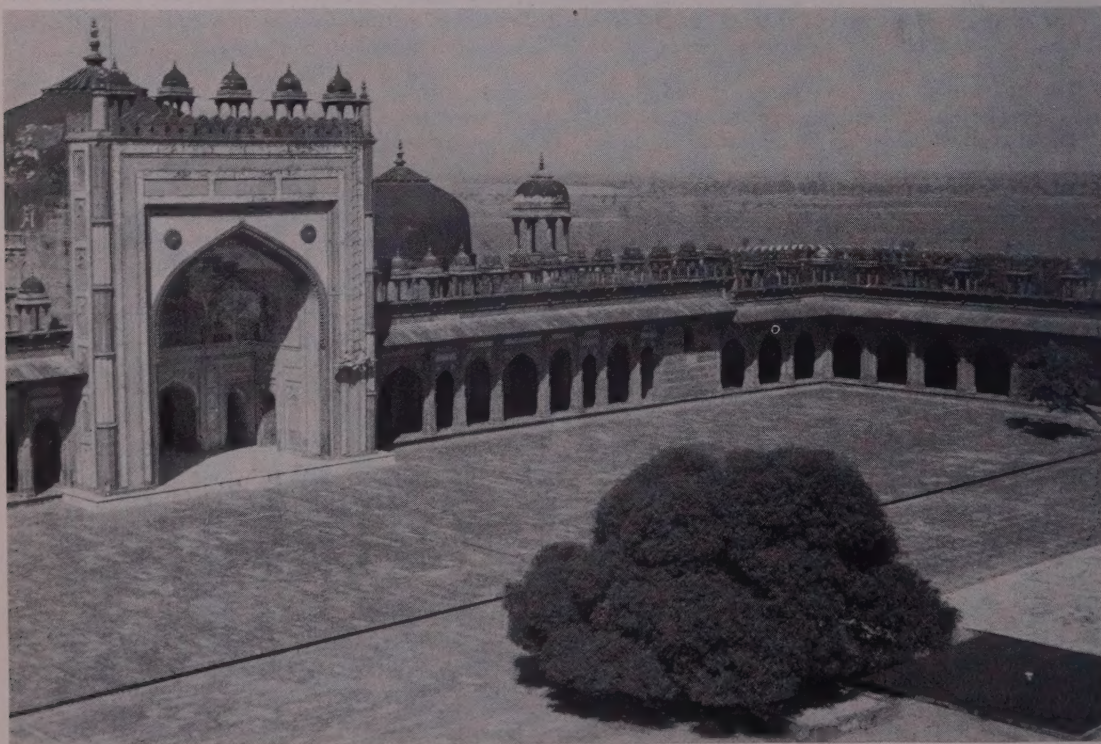
In these days Fatehpur Sikri stands empty all night; then the cars arrive and it is suddenly swarmed over by tourists. One drives up through the first encircling wall of solid red sandstone. Then the ghostly and yet solid city begins. One can wander for hours, once the guides are shaken off, through the great deserted squares and streets, packed with palaces and law-courts, council-chambers, burial-grounds, barracks, stables for horses or elephants. Everywhere the outside walls of the buildings stand up, clear-cut and well-preserved in solid, reddish sandstone and occasional marble. But there is no wood-work or metal-work left: nothing that could be wrenched off and re-used in the modern villages that cling and live busily round the base of the hill.



Associated Press Photos, Delhi

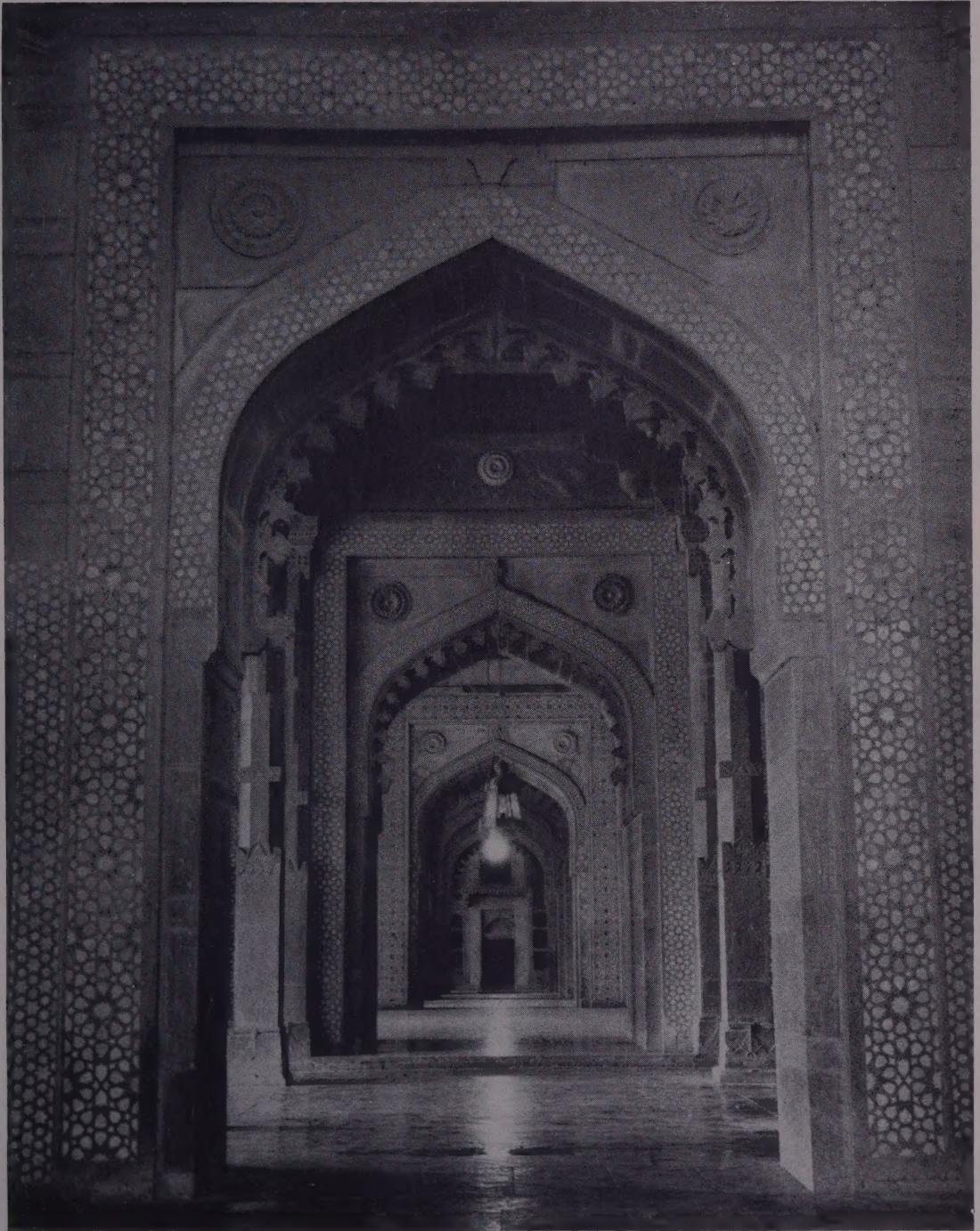
(Above) Looking towards the High Gate from within the courtyard of the Great Mosque, a quadrangle which measures 433 by 366 feet. It is surrounded on three sides by cloisters and on the fourth by (below) the mosque proper, built by Akbar for his spiritual adviser, the Moslem saint Salim Chishti

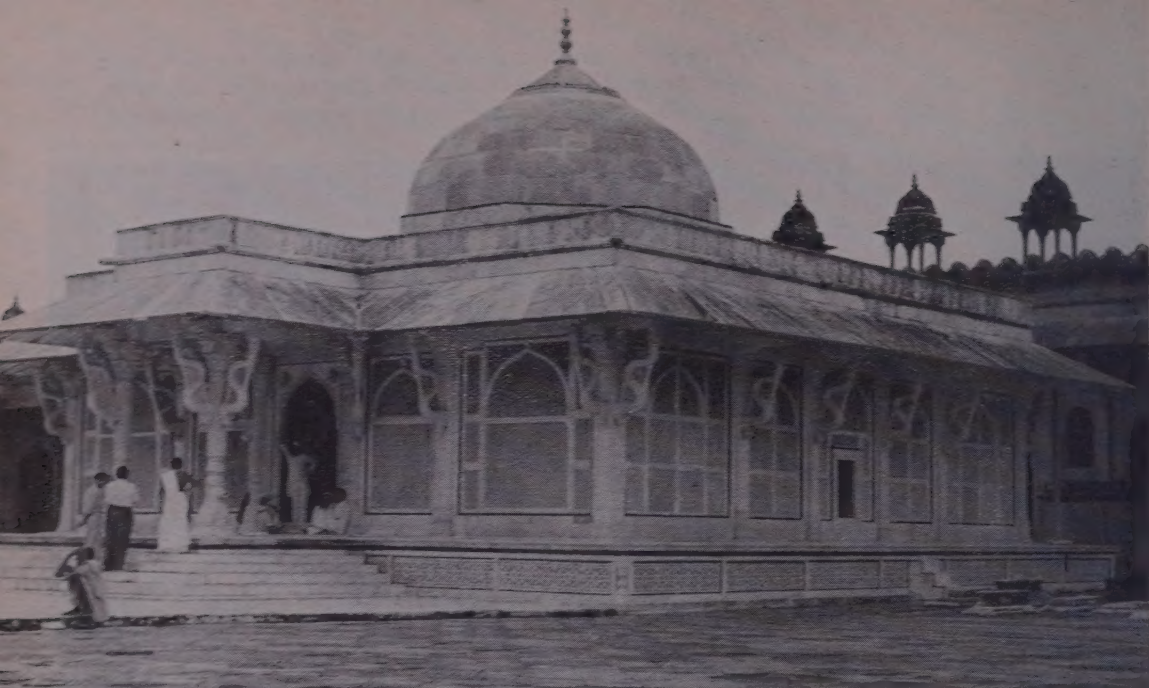
From the author



(Below) The series of lovely arches spanning the ambulatory of the Great Mosque are markedly Persian in style and design. "There is no mysterious darkness; everything is reasonable"

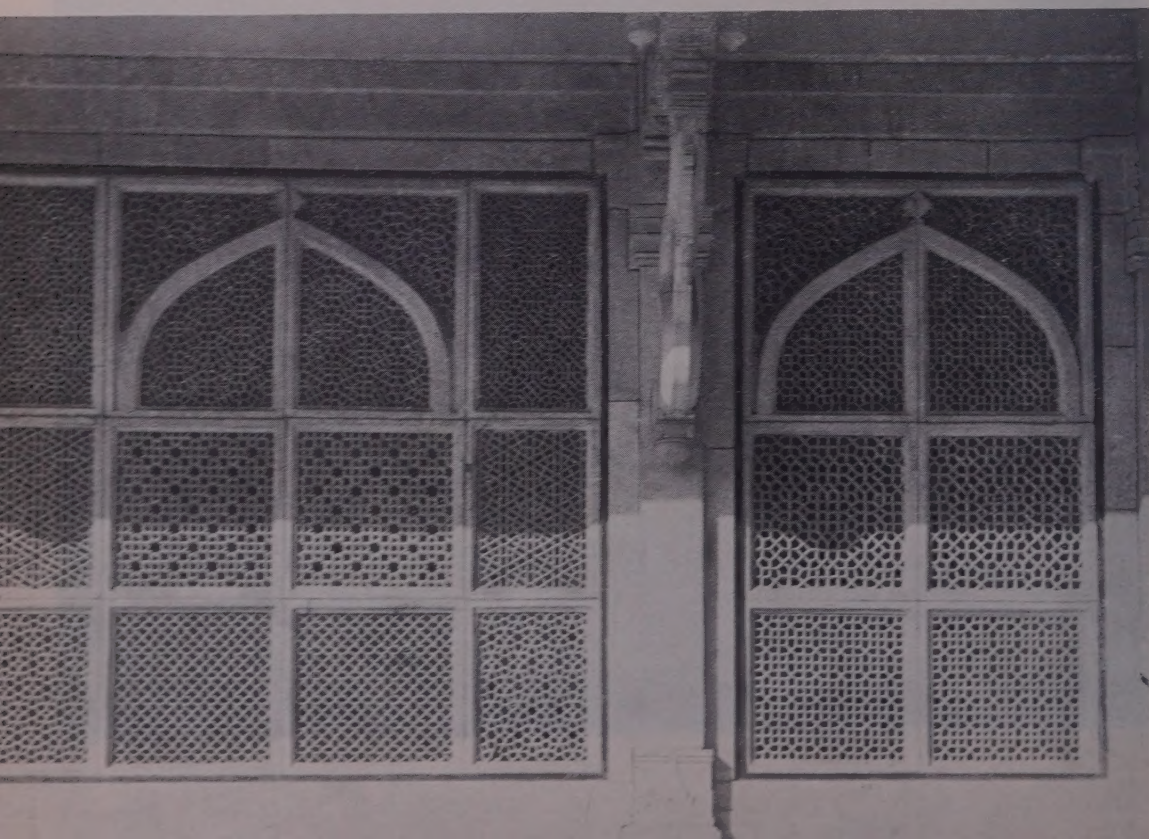
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(Above) A marriage of architectural styles corresponding to Akbar's religious eclecticism is seen in the marble tomb of Salim Chishti, who died in 1571. Out-leaping Hindu brackets contrast with (below) the elegant geometrical screens, strongly Moslem in feeling, which surround the tomb





By courtesy of the Press Information Bureau, Government

(Above) *Opinions differ as to the purpose for which the Panch Mahal was intended. It is an open pavilion of five storeys, each storey smaller than the one on which it stands. Of these the first (below) again shows a mixture of styles, as in the fifty-six columns, no two of which are alike*

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All over the city there are stone courses for running water, now half choked with hot dust. I kept on imagining these courtyards as they must have been when water flowed and flowers were tended and music sounded from the upper windows, when peacocks drooped their tails over the parapets, when priests and poets, soldiers and statesmen met on the pavements. The men would be wearing light trousers, and over them a handsome full-skirted coat to the knees, girdled with an elaborate jewelled and embroidered sash. They would have worn turbans; some would have been bearded, others, like Akbar himself, would only wear a moustache. Jewels would have been much in evidence, and gold, worn as ornaments or woven into the fabric of their coats and turbans. They might have carried small swords or ceremonial staves.

There would have been horses led along, beautiful and spirited, groomed to perfection. Or perhaps an elephant would shoulder evenly through the crowd, painted and howdah'd. The ladies would have been veiled and those of the court probably never set their lovely feet onto hard rock or into hot dust. And crowded—crowded! People coming in from all the country round to the new city of chances, of excitements, the city of Akbar.

All that is left is the shell of stone. The longer one looked at it, the odder the architecture seemed. "It's just got to be Moghul!" an American friend said. One sensed the presence and command of Akbar the Emperor and conqueror who had built that splendid, sky-towering Gate of Victory, towards which one must climb step after step, constantly looking up towards its welcoming depths of cool shadow, with the Moghul arch rising purely above. But I seemed all the time to feel the Central Asian hand in the enormous pepper-pot-topped, enclosing walls.

Akbar's descendants were going to supersede all this influence that had come down from Timur and Jenghiz, to end the pinning down to earth, the strength that only just consents to flower from stone into marble. They were going to inlay the marble with agate and lapis, to make a ripple of patterns, to set the dome of the Taj Mahal, about twenty-four miles away at Agra, floating into the sky from its shimmering platform. But this was not Akbar's idea; he had his city designed and built to his own intentions. He meant it to be as intimidating as it still is.

Yet there were other influences at work. Akbar deliberately allowed himself to come under the spells of the country where he was consolidating his Empire. He was a highly

intentional mixer, from motives of policy as well as taste. Nor was it only in architecture. He set the theologians of several different religions to arguing with one another in a way which the Jesuit Fathers, Aquaviva and Monserrate, found highly embarrassing. Under his patronage, painters came from all over his Empire and beyond, learning from one another, gradually developing what came to be the Moghul style. Ralph Fitch from London, looking doubtless for trade-openings, described it as "a great resort of merchants from Persia and out of India, and very much merchandise". For this city was dazzlingly bigger than 16th-century London.

So, no doubt, the architecture was a deliberate cultural mixture. If the planners had Central Asian ideas, Akbar and his ministers clearly employed Hindu architects and craftsmen. How else account for these slender, square- or hexagonal-sectioned columns, whose brackets suddenly twist into life with peacock and serpent enrichments, with twists and frets that are so far from anything Moslem, so near the temples of South India?

The first thing that the angry young man had to have in his new city was space, the space of a great camp: ground-space for armies with elephants and horses, for buffalo- and ram-fights, for the angular dances of trained camels, for processions and feasts and other glorious occasions; and also roof-space for civilized living and for pigeon-flying, one of his favourite sports. The great square on the central height, into which the Gate of Victory opens, which is bigger than any Western college quadrangle, gives that feeling of space. But the smaller squares with their lower buildings are also spacious. Above the Gate of Victory, one can climb up narrow stone steps, flight after flight, smelling a little of bats. One reaches an intricate roof of steps and pillars and parapets. The main square lies below, momentarily peopled with tourists and guides, a tiny fraction of the ancient crowds. There is the Great Mosque, a shadow cutting cleanly across it, the marble glittering, but only a foretaste of the free and ample use of marble in the Taj Mahal. Here was Akbar's famous inscription: "So said Jesus upon whom be peace. The world is a bridge; pass over it but build no house upon it." A step above the level of the courtyard, the ambulatory of the Mosque stands open under a series of lovely arches. There is no mysterious darkness; everything is reasonable, almost secular.

Many Americans and others from the



Michael Huxley

(Above) *The Diwan-i-Khas, or Hall of Private Audience, at Fatehpur. It appears from the outside to be two storeys high, but on entering is found to consist of one only, in the centre of which rises an eight-sided pillar supporting (right) an enormous circular corbelled capital. Radiating from this to the four corners of the building are four stone galleries enclosed by stone trellis-work balustrades. The pillar, which is made of red sandstone, offers another example of Hindu design combined with Moslem decoration. Tradition says that the Emperor Akbar sat above the capital with four ministers in the corners, while the court remained below*



Associated Press Photos, Delhi

West wear a curious kind of frog-feet in India, galoshes of cloth over elegant heels and nylons when visiting mosques or temples. All this is kept ready for tourists. But I went barefoot, knowing that part of the architectural intention in both kinds of building is to have a contrast on the sensitive foot-sole between hot brick and cool marble. When the sun comes through a screen as in the wonderful carved marble screens round the tomb of the saint, Salim Chishti, one is spotted with warmth. This tomb though Moghul in concept is Hindu in design. The roof hangs in ample shade with a slight outward tilt over peculiarly elongated out-leaping brackets which have a quite different feel from the Moslem, geometrical patterns of the screens. It is the same with the palaces where the mixture of styles seems deliberate and would probably have looked

much more marked when one could still see the internal decorations and wood-work.

It needs time to get one's eye in over certain aspects of this architecture. A pillared Hall of Audience may seem much too low, the roof too hard down on the capitals, until one thinks of it as essentially protection against the sun. Akbar's Hall of Private Audience is very strange, with one enormous highly carved central pillar of red sandstone, sprouting at the top into four galleries, on each of which it is said one of his councillors sat, while he himself sat on the top of the central pillar, dispensing judgement. One asks oneself how much the object of this was to produce awe, how much it was a safety-precaution. I can think of nothing of the same kind anywhere else.

While the great courts are laid out with easy shaded and dignified access one to

The House of Birbal is a small, splendidly carved two-storey building. Birbal was a poor Hindu minstrel and poet who rose by his wit and ability to be Akbar's favourite minister. His military talents were unfortunately not so great and he was defeated and killed by Pathan tribesmen in 1586

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another, many of them could be barred against enemies. There was purpose behind all the planning. And yet even before the city was finished its purpose had changed. Where was the House of Worship in which the doctors of theology disputed? Perhaps somewhere in the great quadrangle. It was Akbar himself who had it pulled down since none of the disputations—no Hindu mystic, no Moslem doctor, no Zoroastrian or Christian priest—had revealed to him the true nature of God, nor showed him clearly what, in a moment of illumination, he had almost grasped.

Nor do we know where Akbar kept his manuscripts, thousands of volumes, many with exquisitely beautiful pictures and illuminations. Where were the workshops of goldsmiths and carpet-weavers? If we could fill the stone shells of the planned city with these artifacts, we would surely see another influence: Persian. Akbar's father, Humayun, was deeply impressed by the arts in his years of exile at the Persian court and it is from there that Moghul painting took its being. But the emptiness of the buildings of Fatehpur Sikri is constantly teasing one to fill them in.

There is, for example, the puzzle of the Panch Mahal. Did the five floors of this great stepped and pillared building, from which one can see over the whole strange, dry city, house merchants or craftsmen, or was it rather a place to walk and talk, a several-storeyed and partly shaded forum? Perhaps the clearest indication of its purpose lies in the fact that each of the main floors was formerly enclosed by stone screens, which also, stretching from one supporting column to another, divided the open space into cubicles. Here the ladies of the royal household could walk and play unveiled, could touch their musical instruments and look down on the soldiers and courtiers below. The upper floors are surrounded by terraces and these, no doubt, had fruit-trees and flowers in pots well watered morning and evening, tame birds and perhaps gazelles or monkeys. For whom else than the Emperor could that small kiosk, forming with its four slender columns the uppermost floor, be designed? Here he might sit in the cool of a summer evening or a moonlit night, and invite the lady of the moment, Moslem, Hindu or Christian, to share the view below of his planned city and the faint far outlines of the country beyond.

Perhaps it is the house, the little palace, of the poet Birbal which one most wants to fill in and furnish. It stands now a trifle isolated,

though not more than a short walk from everywhere else—the baths, the palaces of the queens, the little mosque, the colonnades. There must have been a small intimate garden round it on two sides at least, watered from those runnels that were part of the plan. The rooms are not large, but the proportions and what decorations survive are beautiful. Akbar must have been happy to go there, to talk and listen and be assured that here at least there was no treachery. But the carpets and frescoes on the walls? The low seats and silken cushions, the glass and the porcelain, the scent of flowers?

Most of the courts are paved with great flat stones; the wall-stones are huge. A terrifying amount of hard and painful labour must have gone into it. Much has been lost round the outskirts; arches have fallen in, steps pulled away; the great stone elephants by the gate are only just recognizable. The palaces of Akbar's chief queens still stand. The Hindu queen had hers in a markedly Hindu style. They are small as palaces go: a main hall and a few small rooms off it. One sees where shelves, basins, even tiny fountains must have been. It is the water that one misses always. There must have been constant man-power busy on this in those few years of the city's life: a refreshing babble along all the culverts and perhaps the pretty Moghul trick of water flowing over grass for a few hours a day, leaving it soaked and cool for the feet of queens and dancers. Only here and there are tanks of water still found, as in the main quadrangle of the Great Mosque, beside a single spreading tree. But in the old days there must have been ranks of tulips and fruit-trees, like the inch-high mangoes and pears that one sees in the background of Moghul paintings. A planned city is always in all cultures to some extent a garden city.

But why was it left almost as suddenly as it was begun? Was it simply that the water gave out? It seems to me not wholly probable. Akbar would have used his engineers to solve that one. It would have been within his and their powers. Fatehpur Sikri was built to make firm the luck of the young man. He lived on and changed and his luck changed and nobody gave him the certainty of any God. His young friends grew old or died. Fatehpur Sikri after fourteen years had suddenly become part of the past. He had to leave it, to do something else with his furious energy. Fatehpur Sikri was deserted for ever. The tourists come in the morning. But even by midday they are gone.

Sarawak in the Whirlpool of South East Asia

by TOM HARRISSON, D.S.O.

Among the out-of-the-way places which the Duke of Edinburgh will be visiting in Britannia next spring is Sarawak. Mr Harrison, who is Government Ethnologist and Curator of the Sarawak Museum at Kuching, has unique experience of the people whom the Duke will meet there and whose inter-racial friendliness, in a region where mutual hostility is rife, he describes and explains

I BEGAN to know South-East Asia twenty-six years ago, and have lived in it continually for the last thirteen. During that time, and particularly during the last decade, there have, of course, been immense changes in this part of the world. But one is liable to forget that great changes are far from uncommon here and that they have taken place as dramatically (if not more so) on several occasions in the not too ancient past. Large-scale excavations which the Sarawak Museum has been making in recent years along the west coast of Borneo suggest, for instance, massive upheavals at the end of the Bronze Age, with a change to the use of iron and an immense growth of Indian and Chinese influences. Again, following the impact of Mohammedanism from the 14th century onwards and the arrival of Magellan's ship (the first to go round the world) in Borneo in 1521, there came at about our Elizabethan era the rapid introduction of Western ethics, tougher and more ruthless than anything that had gone before.

Within the span of an ordinary European's experience of the East, he who lives there feels (sometimes strongly) a recent change in the attitude to people with white skins. A lot is read and heard about the growth of Asian nationalism and, associated with it, a dislike of Westerners. The British have moved out of India and Burma, the Dutch have been thrown out of Indonesia, the French driven forth from most of Indo-China, and so on. Two decades ago, Thailand was the only country in South-East Asia with any fair claim to be independent and self-ruled. Today it is surrounded by such countries, and the only ones that are still closely linked to any Western power in the full administrative sense are the three British territories of Borneo. Of these the westernmost, and in many ways a good example of what I want to write about, is Sarawak, long famous as the vast jungle estate of the benevolent Brooke family, where

those white Rajahs ruled like benign squires and liberal-minded autocrats for more than a century.

In Sarawak today there is little visible change in the attitude to Westerners or any other people. In a country with an extraordinarily polyglot population, racial tensions have so far not been evident. I write racial tensions in the plural, deliberately; because the Westerners suffer not only from shortness of time-experience, but also from a kind of colour-astigmatism. It is difficult for the "Tuan", who no longer finds himself automatically revered in Singapore or esteemed in Saigon and not even tolerated in Djakarta, to remember that what is happening to him is not owing to *him*, particularly. For example, in many of the countries in this part of the world the Chinese actually have a less pleasant time than the English or Germans. It is no fun, right now, to be a Chinese of any kind over much of Thailand or Indonesia. It is hardly more fun to be a Tamil in Ceylon. Nor is it much fun to be a Hindu in parts of Pakistan, a Mohammedan in parts of India, a Christian in Sumatra or a pagan in the Celebes. And the whirling phases of the last two millennia have brought such people—of all kinds, races and creeds—into admixture in the whirlpool of South-East Asia.

What is the secret of Sarawak's tolerance? I think it may be attributed to three things. First of all, size. It is easier for friendly, easy-going attitudes to persist, in Asia, in a fairly small country. Such a country, if it has survived at all into the present day, might owe its survival either to a complete dominance of one racial group or to a symbiosis between several groups—a mutual dependence long established and elaborated in social, cultural and economic habits. In fact, the extraordinarily complicated movements of peoples for many centuries have virtually precluded the monopoly of any one group over any large tract of land south of China; so that,



All Ektachromes by Hedda

The decorous ceremony of a Malay wedding. In Sarawak today very different communities live happily side by side. The conversion of the coast-dwellers to Islam by Arab seafarers began over 600 years ago and the converts are mainly known as "Malays". With the Melanaus, a distinct people who are also Moslems, they form about a quarter of the population. Their faith is strong and their greatest ambition is to make the expensive pilgrimage or Haj to the Holy Places in Arabia. In this photograph the bride is reading the Koran with a relative who, despite his youth, has already made the Haj



A Dayak proudly holding his fighting-cock. The name Dayak varies in local significance, being applied generally to that part of Sarawak's population—about a third—who live up-country or are not Moslems. While the head-hunting for which they were once famous has long been abandoned, they still love anything that savours of excitement—an expedition into the jungle, service with British forces in Malaya or the spectacle of steel-spurred fighting-cocks battling to the death. But they are also intensely hospitable, generous and warm-hearted

An Arcadian scene in the country of the Kelabits, remotest and smallest of the Dayak peoples of Sarawak. Despite their isolation the Kelabits are go-ahead and in touch with outside ideas. They were entirely illiterate in 1945; now, thanks to the initiative of Tom Harrison and his wartime assistant adjutant, a Christian from Timor, schools flourish and most Kelabits are literate. It was this schoolmaster who introduced pipes and flutes of bamboo and every village school has its own band which is invariably headed by the small girls





Mr Tai Ek Huang, headmaster of the Chinese school at Simang-gang, is a gifted artist in water-colours in the traditional Chinese style. Chinese influence has been felt in Sarawak for at least twelve centuries ; and though the Chinese did not settle in large numbers until the 19th century they now comprise more than a quarter of the population and are increasing rapidly. They occupy a valuable place in Sarawak's economy both in retail trade, which they control throughout the country, and also, for example, as industrious rubber- and pepper-planters. Like Chinese the world over they retain great pride and interest in the cultural heritage of their land of origin

nearly always, the answer here is symbiosis. Once this symbiosis has been formed and grown up it tends, unless something very drastic occurs to upset it, to work for roughly the benefit of all and at least to enable each group to pursue its own way of life without being too much upset or interfered with by others. And that, whatever politicians and propagandists may say, is the basic dream of men nearly everywhere; being also the basic *drive* of many of the settled peoples of Asia. Indeed, one of the reasons they dislike Europeans and other recent 'outsiders' is because these do seem to threaten the local way of life, the simplicities and self-sufficiencies on which a great part of Asian living was based before the impact of Western technocracies and to which, fundamentally even if irrationally, the vast masses of Asia deeply wish to return.

Smallness is often accompanied by a lack of riches and attraction which has enabled such a country as Sarawak to carry on without being absorbed into some vast agglomerate or much 'developed' by outside interests. It helps in this direction if the country has plenty of large mountains, rivers, swamps or other intractable zones, so that it is difficult for outsiders to get in readily and even more so for them to exploit the natural resources. The mere sight, close to the Equator, of a good range of mountains has a soporific effect on many businessmen and prospectors!

Sarawak in particular is tormented with mountains, ravines, floods, rapids, great expanses of jungle, hordes of biting insects and all the rest of the things which make it

and similar countries less attractive to those who are inexpert or untrained by a lifetime of adjustment. In such places, the centres of sophistication—which nowadays also mean the centres of economic development—tend to be entirely concentrated along navigable rivers or along the coastline. Remoter parts are left to get on with their own life.

But (and herein lies the essence of a second factor working for tolerance) "getting on with one's own life" has never, in Asia, meant living exclusively. On the contrary, there has been far more racial, genetic, cultural and economic interchange than in Europe or America. I doubt whether the anthropological conception of isolated groups with coherent self-evolutions ever was or ever can be truly applicable anywhere, even in the remote mountain fastnesses of New Guinea or the least visited islands of the Pacific. Certainly nothing of the kind has happened in South-East Asia, even in the remote uplands in the heartland of Borneo—the part I know best of all, since I was dropped there by parachute (the one easy way of access) during World War II. The Kelabits of the far uplands are relatively as much in touch with world trends and outside ideas as the people of Bolton in Lancashire, whom I lived among and mass-observed for three years before the war.

Let us consider for a moment these remotest Kelabits, living near the headwaters of the Baram River in Sarawak. My dropping in was itself a dramatic, revolutionary event; and it led to such consequences, for instance,





Hedda Morrison

Dayak customers bring rubber or rice to the Chinese shopkeeper in exchange for the wares he sells. Chinese traders enjoy a merited reputation for fair dealing even with illiterate customers, who accept their accounts though unable to check them

as my starting later the first interior school there, using my assistant adjutant from the wartime days, a Timorese Christian teacher, as the first headmaster. The people who in 1945 were 100 per cent illiterate and of whom only 1 per cent could speak any outside language, now have mass-literacy and can all speak Malay. One young man speaks English so well that he recently represented the

Sarawak Government internationally. There are now seven whole-time Sarawak Civil Servants within a day's walk of the place I dropped into, then virtually unexplored country.

But it would be utterly wrong to assume that this was the first change in the Kelabit experience. In fact, it was only the last; that is the latest, so far. Their whole way of life depends on the irrigation of ideas from the outside. The things they value most and around which they build some of their most elaborate cultural ideas include: jars, five hundred to a thousand years old, brought from the mainland of China to the coast and traded in a tremendous journey over the mountains in exchange for their spring-salt, damar gum, rhinoceros-horn and hornbill-ivory; beads which probably date back well over a thousand years and derive from the eastern Mediterranean; agricultural techniques, perhaps the most advanced in Borneo, which they have developed for themselves; and an active megalithic culture, erecting stone monuments on a massive scale for the dead—one of the few surviving relics of a great Bronze-Age cult which was formerly widespread throughout Asia and the world. There is nothing inconsistent about all these things occurring mixed up together on a remote plateau 3000 feet above sea-level; and the introduction of a European from the air or a Timorese Catechist with a school and a music-book is only a rather emphatic part of the process—

emphatic because we can see it now—though the tempo of change has been accelerated.

Such interchanges are the counterpart of those which have affected less remote areas. Within a thousand years Sarawak—small as it is, with a present-day population of only about half a million—has undergone successive major religious impacts as follows: Buddhism, itself impinging upon a very

powerful ship-of-the-dead and afterworld cult connected with Shamanism; Hinduism; a sort of vague Confucian animism; Islam; and militant Christianity. All these have had large influences. Yet none of them excluded the others. Not only can and do all such beliefs exist side by side and mixed up together; each time a new one comes along, it starts another. In the last ten years, since Brooke controls were relaxed, Christian missionaries of four sects have carried out widespread conversions throughout the interior. Some of the results have so bewildered some of the people that an entirely new dream-cult has developed, called Bungan-Malan. This cult is acquiring great influence and now numbers many thousands of adherents in British and Indonesian Borneo.

If beliefs in Sarawak have got thoroughly mixed up, so have people; and mutual tolerance is greatly assisted if the people are so mixed up that no-one is quite certain who is who or (especially) who is best, first, oldest or most important! Nastiness only too often begins when one group can prove—or, failing that, convince itself—that it is the earliest or the most aristocratic. This is extraordinarily difficult to do in Borneo. It is an easily demonstrated over-simplification to say that the Chinese are recent interlopers. Yet a large part of Dayak and other native art clearly derives from pre-Christian Chou Dynasty influences coming out of China. The earliest non-local prehistoric remains so far found in Borneo are Chinese. There is unquestionable evidence of very large-scale direct contact between China and Sarawak, at least from about A.D. 700. Trading centres as large as modern towns were flourishing in this China trade, along the west coast of Borneo, a thousand years ago. Indeed, it might be quite difficult for any Borneo people to prove that they had not got a lot of Chinese blood in them. Even the Royal family's written traditions of the proud Sultanate of Brunei freely admit this Chinese inheritance, in the third Islamic generation of the ancient throne.

Or, at the other end of the scale, the Malays, who are so much at power in administration and traditions through the islands, are largely a people who differ in no way by blood and origin from the pagan (and latterly Christian) peoples inland. Islam only came so far east in the 14th century. No Malays worth mentioning, in the Malay Peninsular sense, came here. But a few missionaries, mostly Arabs, mass-converted people within easy reach of the coast, the Dayaks, Melanaus and other pagan "head-hunters" who were

exactly the same people as those living further inland. On becoming Mohammedan these people also became (as they still do today) "Malay" overnight. Those living further inland and in the mountains simply remained Dayaks and pagans and are now perhaps Christians or Bungan-Malans.

Inter-racial friendliness and sanity can, however, suffer if one group tries to dominate another; and this is where my third factor comes in—wise and strong rulers who keep a balance and do not allow powerful minorities to carry out excesses. Such an influence was exerted by the Brooke family and, modified for 1958, continues in Sarawak today. The danger of outside rule is that it may obstruct the human interchanges which are the life-blood of Asia. They were, in fact, to a very considerable extent restrained and even stopped, once Western governments became paramount in the 18th and 19th centuries. Without meaning to do so, these governments, because they represented different Western nations—often at war with each other—restricted and limited movement, including the movement of ideas. They invented nations instead of sultanates, kingdoms and transient dynasties. Now, in the new wave of Asian nationalism—which has developed straight out of the Western conception of statehood—this tendency to isolate groups topographically and too rigidly for the nature of Asia has, indeed, become accentuated. Its worst expression is in the fantastic increase of difficulty in the past decade for anyone, of any race, to move about anywhere in Asia, owing to the monstrous growth of passport regulations, residents' visas, inoculation certificates, poll-taxes, police registrations and so on. Countries are making themselves, as it were, quarantine-stations for culture. It is difficult to believe that they—or anyone else—can benefit from this kind of thing, in the end. Perhaps it may serve a purpose for a decade or two. Fundamentally, however, it contradicts not only the whole history of South-East Asia, but also some deeply-felt needs of the area. There is always the danger that, on the one hand, the basic dream of self-sufficiency and quiet living will be swept aside by a wave of material excess and exploitation; and, on the other, that self-sufficiency will degenerate into self-satisfaction and, ultimately, stagnation. For in Asia, far more than in Europe or America, things of the mind matter, even to the simplest, remotest, materially poorest people. The ideas don't have to be very elaborate. But there have to be ideas; and they must move . . .

Towers of the Mani

by PATRICK LEIGH FERMOR



All photographs by Joan Eyres-Monsell

(Above) A Maniot woman working at the salt-pans on the Tigani, a spit of rock on the western side of the Mani on which are the ruins of the castle from which the whole region takes its name

Mr Leigh Fermor's part in guerilla operations against the Germans in Crete is well known; his abilities as a writer are becoming more so and his reputation in that respect will be increased by his book on the southern Morea entitled Mani, published this month by John Murray, which is the Book Society's choice and from which the extracts composing the following article are taken

WE got out of the boat on a lonely, crescent-shaped ledge of rock that almost surrounded a deep blue pool. The children rowed back to their ruined village and we dived out of the blaze of the noonday into the cool world below. It was a blue-green paradise of submarine canyons and grottoes and rock shelves with copses of dark green seaweed. But when, after lying comatose in the sun, we dressed and tried to strike inland again, the rock wall (which had looked so easy from the sea) was unscalable. It was only after wading and scrambling along the shore for half an hour that we could find a way up a slithering landslide that threatened to deposit us into the sea below at every step. At last, panting, thorn-riddled and caked with salt and dust, we levered ourselves onto the blank Mani again and stumbled up an endless lane of

rolling pebbles and ankle-snapping boulders in the stagnant glare. The sun and the sea had unhinged our joints, turned our limbs to lead and our throats to limekilns. "Tell them you're in a hot place called the Mani, where there is nothing but stones"; the words of the innkeeper's wife rattled around in our empty brain-pans. There was not a tree to relieve the skull-like blankness. At last, turning a shoulder of rock, two broken towers came in sight in a clump of prickly pear. Our spirits revived at the thought of water. But, hard as we knocked on their doors, nobody opened; a thing which was all the more strange as a middle-aged man peered at us through the bars of an upper window. So we dragged ourselves from the doorstep and the harrowing trek continued. But at the top of the next switchback of lane the sight below

made us wipe the sweat from our stinging eyes and gaze.

On the other side of a hot valley rose a long saddle of rock on either end of which a village was gathered and each village was a long solid sheaf of towers. There were scores of them climbing into the sky in a rustic metropolis, each tower seeming to vie with the others in attaining a more preposterous height: a vision as bewildering as the distant skyline of Manhattan or that first apparition of gaunt mediaeval skyscrapers that meets the eye of the traveller approaching San Gimignano across the Tuscan plain. But there were no bridges or ships here, no bastioned town wall or procession of cypresses to detract from the bare upward thrust of all these perpendiculars of sun-refracting facet and dark shadow. The tops were sawn off flat, the gun-slits invisible. These two mad villages of Kittā and Nomia shot straight out of the rock in a grove of rectangular organ-pipes, their sides facing in every direction so that some of the towers were flanked with a stripe of shade, some turned bare and two-dimensional towards the sun, others twisted in their sockets and seeming to present two visible and equal sides, one in light and one in shade, of symmetrical prisms. Nothing moved and in the trembling and fiery light they had the hallucinating improbability of a mirage.

We crossed the intervening ossuary of hill-side and stepped inside the nearest town. The canyons of lane that twisted through the towers were empty and silent as though the inhabitants had fled an aeon ago or a plague had reaped them all in an afternoon. And yet there were signs of recent life: a dozen sacks of dried carob-pods in a courtyard, a child's cart made out of a box and fitted with castors of cotton-reels, a scythe leaning against an iron-studded door. A cat stretched sound asleep along the coping of a wall. Cobbles or slabs of stone alternated with the muffling dust underfoot and tower after tower soared on either hand. The town was empty or locked in catalepsy, paralysed in a spell of sleep which seemed unbreakable. The main square was scarcely larger than a room, and the steep ascending planes of masonry that elbowed it in on all sides lent it the

aspect of the bottom of a dried-up well from whose floor sprang a few motionless mulberry trees. The heat and stagnation, the heavy breathlessness of the air and the warm smell of the dust cast a mantle of utter strangeness over this town.

We soon stopped our vain and sacrilegious tattoo on the shutters of the only shop and settled under a stone loggia in speechless exhaustion. The walls of the little square were whitewashed in a dado several yards high and the worn ledge of a stone seat ran all the way round. Misspelt slogans in lurching black characters across the whitewash cried *Long live the King!* Another said *Long live eternal Greece*, and a third, *Death to all Traitors*.

Our torpor was broken at length by the appearance of an old woman in black with a face like a flint. She clicked her tongue in commiseration and padded quickly away, returning with a pitcher and a glass and a plate of prickly pears, saying she had sent her great-granddaughter to rouse the shop-keeper. He arrived, touzled with sleep and repeating, as he unlocked the shutters, that it was a shame we had been made to wait. "In Kittā, too!" he said waving his hand at the towers. "I'm sure it wouldn't happen to me in London . . ." I had a vision of his solitary and despairing figure in a mysteriously deserted Piccadilly, squatting with arms akimbo on the steps of Eros's statue in a heat-wave . . .

He spread a table under a mulberry tree and loaded it with fried eggs, chopped tomatoes, onions, garlic and some bitter wine and forked lumps of pickled pork dripping in oil



A. J. Thornton

out of a heavy jar. (This is called *Syglino*, and though very salt, it is excellent.) Our benefactress had been joined by one of her gossips, another fierce nonagenarian; they sat croaking together, leaning over their sticks on the stone seat under *Death to all Traitors*. There was something baleful about these two black-coiffed figures under the snarl of the slogan: they looked implacable and fate-spinning crones.

"A hot place called the Mani, where there is nothing but stones." It is the central of three jagged peninsulas in the Morea or Peloponnesus; its backbone is the Taygetus mountains, its tip Cape Matapan, the southernmost point in Greece

As the heat subsided, the *rouga*—for that is the name of these little squares in tower-villages (the one in Kitta is further distinguished by the nickname of the Nest)—began to fill with black headkerchiefs and circular hats. The men were the darkest Maniots I had so far encountered. By the time we left, the bench was crowded and the *rouga*, like a room at a party, was covered with standing and operatically interchanging groups, while the towers overhead echoed with the thick dialect of the region. Kitta fell behind us, the towers laying lath-like shadows across the hillside which were broken by boulders and buckled by the fall and upheaval of the ground. It is the ancient Messe "famous for its doves", once mentioned by Homer as having sent a contingent to swell the host of Agamemnon before Troy. Dusk was gathering as we entered the great stook of towers called Nomia, and the gulfs between them were a-twitter with wheeling bats. A young man from Kitta had befriended us, taking us to dine at his uncle's in the nearby village of Kechriánika, which lay in the middle of a thick wood. Just before the trees swallowed us up, we looked back at the faintly discernible towers of Kitta and Nomia where lights were beginning to twinkle.

"*Nyklianika Meri!*" he said in accents of wonder. "Nyklian places!"

I had heard this unfamiliar word *Nyklianos* several times lately and never anywhere else in Greece. What did it mean? It appeared that Nyklians in contrast to the *achamnómeroi*, the hinds or villeins, were a sort of military, landowning aristocracy, a rough-and-ready Maniot version of Japanese feudalism, of which the bey or the *bashkapetan* (above all, the head of the Mavromichalis family) was Shogun, and the greater and lesser Nyklians the Daimyos and Samurais, some of whom would wander abroad





"Each village was a solid sheaf of towers . . . as bewildering as the distant skyline of Manhattan." Vatheia, one of the tower-villages perched on the sun-baked rock-ridges of the Mani peninsula

like mercenary Ronins. I asked what on earth the word came from; it means nothing in ordinary Greek. This queer feudalism, an odd deviation from the democratic world of post-Byzantine Greece, sounded so peculiar that I determined to find out more.

* * *

In 1295, during one of those civil wars that did much, between the reigns of the Frankish emperors and the Turkish capture of Constantinople, to weaken what was left of the restored Byzantine Empire, Andronicus II Palaeologue sacked Nykli in Arcadia. This town, on the site of which Tripoli now stands, was originally a colony of Spartans from

Amoukli. When the Morea was conquered by the Franks, Nykli, owing to its position as a centre of communications, became strategically important and the seat of a powerful barony; and when the Frankish power began to decline, it was largely inhabited by those strange hybrids of Greek and Frankish blood known as "*gasmouli*". Sometimes the French language and the Catholic religion prevailed, sometimes Greek and the Orthodox though the tendency to Hellenism and Orthodoxy increased with time. After the attack of Andronicus, not one stone was left on another, and the Nyklians fled. A number of them (according to my authority) took the steep but well-worn tracks across the Taygetus to



"The steep ascending planes of masonry" of the many-towered Maniot villages among which the Nyklians, the military landowning aristocracy of the Mani, conducted until the second half of the 19th century their long battles, family against family, in the struggle for power and prestige. At the feet of these towers their descendants still live, hemmed in as if "at the bottom of a dried-up well"



the south of the thinly populated Mani, settling in exactly the regions of which I have just been writing. Their headquarters in fact, were at Kittà, and the name may have some kinship with the Frankish words *cité* or *città*. From them, perhaps (for all here is nebulous), ideas of a feudal hierarchy, modified by the wild ways of the Mani, caught on. When the Mani filled up during the following centuries and struggles for local power were engaged between village and village and family and family, Nykliàn was the word used to apply to those that came out on top. Before, life in the Mani had been semi-troglodytic, uncouth in the extreme, but fairly pacific. Now, families began to fortify themselves behind thick walls and under slab-roofs. Quarrels and feuds for the elbow-room of families increased with the thickening population and the chaos lasted from the 14th century until late in the 19th. Those that shook themselves out of the ruck, then, were the Nyklians; the subjugated ruck were the *achamnómeroi*. There is something very strange about these centuries of struggle for local dominion over those barren stones; for the grazing-rights on the rare blades of grass and possession of the ledges where corn could grow and olive trees take root and for salt-gathering rights along the awful shores. The Nyklians always established themselves on high ground, and they alone had the right to roof their houses with slabs of marble. The villeins were forced to inhabit the lower parts of the villages, their thin roofs well within range of the Nykliàn towers. These humble helots were forbidden to support their roofs with semicircular arches like their betters, and they were often referred to merely as "the donkeys" by the Nyklians. They were subjected to every kind of contumely and scorn. They were, however, allowed to carry arms, and they would help their Nykliàn overlords in inter-Nykliàn strife and piratical expeditions. Some, endowed with an unusual share of valour or cunning, would raise themselves to Nykliàn status, and be accepted as such; but, though it was considered no shame for a Nykliàn to marry a villein girl, it was a disgrace for a Nykliàn girl to marry a villein. It was, in a sense, an open aristocracy, though the sword was the only key. It goes without saying that when, about 1600, the first towers began to change the skyline of Mani villages, they were an exclusively Nykliàn prerogative.

As time passed, the power of the Nyklians acquired the patina of continuity, and their pride of race grew. The boast of Spartan origins was stiffened in many cases by claims



Apart from tactical considerations, the standing of a Nykliàn family was assessed by the height of its towers. For five centuries the Nyklians shot at each other from the shelter of their austere, rectangular fortress-homes

ΖΗΤΩ
ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ



In the village of Kitta, old women stand beneath a slogan which says: "Long live the King!" Though ancient feuds are over the politics of modern Greece provide ample grounds for passionate dispute

of imperial or noble Byzantine descent and, in a few cases, of kinship with the great feudal families of the Franks. With the passage of generations and the branching of offshoot families, clans were formed, and into these, it seems, minor Nyklians and even villein families were welcomed. But, though no records were kept, there was always a consciousness of who were, or were not, kith and kin. Their boasts were again reinforced by feats of arms against the Turks; and, of course, against each other. As the population grew, several Nyklian families would often inhabit the same village, each of them determined to dominate the rest and grasp the kapetanship. To do this they had to be in a position to destroy their competitors' houses by bombarding them from above with boulders and smashing their marble roofs; so the towers began to grow, each in turn, during periods of truce, calling his neighbours'

bluff with yet another storey, and so climbing further into the air until they were all perched at the top of fantastic pinnacles.

Wherever the blood-feud reigns, some system of mitigation, some code of rules, is automatically evolved; or life, already a hazardous business, would become unlivable. They have the same purpose as the laws of chivalry in the barbarism of the Dark Ages. The lack of any of these limitations, in spite of certain links with the comparative respectability of the *mafia*, is perhaps the most notable aspect of gang-warfare in large American towns.

Though the Maniots use the Italian word, the vendettas of the Mani were originally a matter of clan or family, not individual, warfare. They were rarely launched, as they are in Crete today, by a slight or an insult to the *philotimo*, feminine honour, the forcible abduction of a bride by a party of braves,

cattle-rustling or any momentary cause. The killing of one Deep Maniot would certainly have his family up in arms, determined to "get the blood back", to avenge the dead kinsman by the death, not necessarily of the guilty man but of the pick of the offending family, which was deemed corporately responsible for the crime. But they were usually launched after family conclaves, with a definite object in view, which was no less than the total annihilation of an opposing Nyklian family.

In these contests, the first blow was never struck without warning. War was formally declared by the challenging side. The church bells were rung: *We are enemies! Beware!* Then both sides would take to their towers, the war was on, and any means of destroying the other side was fair. The feud would often continue for years, during which it was impossible for either faction to leave their towers by daylight. Water, supplies, powder and shot were smuggled in at night and the

gun-slits bristled with long barrels which kept up a regular fusillade all day long. If they were in range and lower down, the enemies' roofs would be smashed with flung rocks and sleepers were shot at night by enemies creeping up and firing through chinks in the wall or through windows imprudently left unguarded. Marksmen were sent out on *khosia*, as it is called, to lie in wait for isolated enemies in lonely places—behind rocks, up dark lanes or in the branches of trees—to pick them off, cut them down with a sword or stab them to death. It was the aim of each side to destroy any member of the other, but it was a double success if they killed a prominent one. Sallies from the towers were sometimes made and gun-fights moved from street to street while the rest of the village remained prudently indoors. The rough jottings of a primitive Deep Maniot surgeon in the 18th century show, by the astonishing number of scimitar and yataghan and dagger wounds recorded in his practice, that hand-to-hand

The last few decades have disarmed the prejudices and blurred former distinctions between the Nyklians and the hinds or villeins whom they subjugated. But, sitting in the evening on the stone benches in the village square, the dark, wiry Maniot men still discourse regretfully of battles long ago





A Maniot family and their animals (the cow is a great rarity) on one of the threshing-floors of Vatheia. A tight-meshed network of walls divides the stony fields in which an inch or two of dusty earth affords purchase for the grains of wheat

battles were very frequent. The same source also proves that women were not exempt, and their casualties were heavy. A favourite stratagem was the neutralization of the fire-power of an enemy tower in order that a picked band, by a bold rush or by stealth, might pile wood and hay against the base of the tower, soak the fuel with oil and set fire to it in the hope of burning the defenders to death or cutting them down with bullets or yataghans as they ran for it. Sometimes the door itself was blown down with a powder-keg and combustibles and burning brands were pitched into the bottom chamber. In lucky cases the powder-magazine would be touched off and the whole tower, with its defenders, blown to bits. A detail that sounds almost incredible but which evidence bears out, is that entire towers were built under fire; the walls facing the zone beaten by the enemy were reared by night, the remainder during the day, with the defenders firing from one side while the masons laid one great limestone cube on another until they had overtopped the enemy.

The discovery of gunpowder and of the burning of lime for tower-building were deemed priceless godsend by the Maniots. A third inestimable boon was the importation of cannon. Heavy pieces (with barrels two-and-a-half yards long) cast in Constantinople or Venice or Woolwich were joyfully lugged from the shore by men and mules and hoisted into the top chambers of the towers while teams of mules wound up the stony valleys under loads of powder-kegs and shot. They were now able to bombard enemy towers a quarter of a mile away or if, as it often happened, they were only across the street, to batter each other to bits at point-blank range. When two powerful Nyklians of the same village were at war, it must be remembered that each side owned a number of towers and the opposing sides were sometimes several hundreds strong. At the height of a feud these forests of towers were plumed with the flashes of cannon, the air was a criss-cross of the trajectories of flying balls; shot came sailing or bouncing along the lanes, every slit concealed a man with a gun, every wall a group from which the slightest enemy movement would draw a hail of musketry, singing and ricochetting and echoing through the labyrinthine streets. There were, as we have seen, frequent *mêlées* at close quarters, and all the approaches to the village were posted with the *khosia*-men of both sides lying in ambush and cancelling each other out. The neutral population,

though allowed to move about the streets at their risk, wisely resumed the troglodytic existence of their forbears or moved to other villages till the two factions had fought it out.

The theatres of war were no larger than the area bounded by Piccadilly, St James's Street, the east side of St James's Square and Pall Mall; the equivalent, in distance, of the cannonading of Brooks's by White's, Chatham House by the London Library, Lyons Corner House by Swan and Edgars, almost of the Athenaeum and the Reform by the Travellers'. Sometimes it lasted for years: a deadlock in which the only sounds were the boom of cannon, exploding powder, the collapse of masonry, the bang of gunfire and the wail of dirges.

* * * *

No region in Greece was more awkward than the Mani to fit into the modern European state which Greece's rulers were bent on constructing. Under King Otto's regency in the 1830s, several attempts to reduce and pacify the Nyklians failed; but although the Nyklians had their own way in the end, their end was their undoing. An intelligent Bavarian officer called Max Feder, who spoke Greek and knew the Mani and who was indeed a personal friend of all the great Nyklians, travelled the peninsula and, at amicable gatherings in the village *rougas*, enrolled all the kapetans and his Nyklian friends as officers into a militia unit called the Maniot Phalanx, which he commanded successfully in the suppression of other disorders in the Morea. They slowly accustomed themselves to western military notions. The distance between Nyklian and villein decreased, and bit by bit they became partisans of the *status quo*. Kindness and tact succeeded where coercion had been powerless. The electoral system and local government took root, schools were built and—a great landmark in Mani history—a villein was elected mayor of the great Nyklian stronghold of Nomia. The Mani was shared between the nomes of Kalamata and Laconia (the dividing line running along the watershed of the Taygetus) and subdivided into eparchies and demes. A military revolution in Athens forced King Otto to grant a constitution in 1843 and in 1844 Greece had the first general election in all her long history. Burlesque and turbulent though it was—nowhere more so than in the Mani—this was the simultaneous death-rattle of the old order and the muling and puking of modern parliamentary Greece.

Yuletide in Sweden

by M. R. SNODIN

My introduction to the Swedish festival known as "*Jul*" took me completely by surprise. December 1941 found me living in a manor-house, one of those white wooden structures whose architectural grace so satisfactorily complements the Swedish landscape. It was on an island in a southern lake; the dark troubled waters had not yet frozen and the first snow had still to fall. The days were short and sombre and one welcomed the friendliness of the house with its light, its white furniture and its tall tiled stoves.

On the morning of the 13th I was awakened by the sound of singing. The room was black and as I lay between sleeping and waking I picked out the words "*Sankta Lucia*" from a song sung, by three or four female voices, in a language I did not then understand. The singing was now outside my door which opened to reveal the figure of a girl dressed in a long white gown with a crown of lighted candles on her head and a tray in her hands. Behind, in the darkness, stood other white figures each holding a tall candle. This burst of light and of song into the room was something for which I was entirely unprepared, something indeed which I shall never forget.

As the figure approached and placed a cup of coffee and a plate of buns on the table beside my bed I recognized her as the fairest and prettiest girl staying in the house at the time. But even this did not bring me to a fully awakened state. It was not until the little procession had retired, still singing the Lucia song with its attractive melody, and I was left alone to my coffee and buns in the mundane light of my bed-side lamp, that I realized that I had taken part in a fascinating folk-ceremony. I looked at my watch: it was not yet six.

From that time, on every December 13 I have been awakened, or pretended to be, by a number of Lucias, since as a family we celebrate a Swedish Christmas, and Lucia is an integral and most important part of such a festival. With the exception of the lighting of the Advent candles (the first one is lit on the first Sunday in Advent), this is the first blaze of light to hold out a promise of the real Christmas, since in Sweden Christmas is a festival of light as much as anything else. For the Swede even in his modern labour-

saving world (and what country is more electrified than Sweden?) the "living light" in the form of candles and burning logs has a fascination that is difficult to understand unless one has lived in Scandinavia. No-one can be more aware of the danger of fire than the Swede, dwelling as he does in a world of wood, and yet his Christmas-tree is preferably decked with candles with naked flames and it is by candle-light that the family assembles on the morning of Christmas Eve for the coffee and cakes which introduce a day of feasting. Every candlestick, whether of antique silver or of the simplest form of painted wood, is brought out for the occasion; in fact, although the custom is becoming rarer, there are households in which the making of the Christmas candles is still part of the festival itself.

"Living light", be it a candle, a wood-fire or a torch carried on a sleigh on the way to the early morning Christmas service, is an essential contribution to what the Swede calls "*stämning*". It is difficult to try to describe what *stämning* is; it is certainly impossible to translate it either by a word or phrase. The Christmas *stämning* is a feeling of well-being, and perhaps security, which comes from the creation of warmth and light in the darkest of forest winters. There is much that is primitive in it, a "communing with Nature", but the practically-minded would say that Christmas came at a time when work out-of-doors was impossible, when the animals had been slaughtered and the harvest collected, and therefore it was natural that the time should be spent feasting in the warmth and the light with story and music and dancing to make one glad.

So, twelve days before Christmas comes the first light and the first feasting with "*Lucia*" or the "*Little Christmas*". The present form of Lucia, which is extremely popular over the whole of Sweden, is very recent. Practically every home, hospital, office and town has its Lucia. Once in Italy when we could not find a Swedish Lucia we persuaded our Italian maid to play the part. For the Swedish "*Sankta Lucia*" song she substituted the Italian one called "*Santa Lucia*", which is a favourite of those deep-chested tenors who sing in the quay-side cafés of Naples. The words were different but the tune was



K. W. Gullers

On the first Sunday in Advent there appears at the window of many Swedish houses the glimmering light of a single candle. Each subsequent Sunday an additional candle will be lit until on the last Sunday before Christmas all four candles will be shining out into the dark Scandinavian night

exactly the same. The Neapolitan song had its origin in the 19th century as did the present form of Lucia in Sweden, where she superseded an older tradition on the West Coast and in Värmland. It is really only in the last two decades that Lucia has become popular over the whole country. It has not escaped commercial exploitation: one Stockholm newspaper offers, as a prize to the young

lady chosen as its Lucia, a free trip to Syracuse in Sicily, the scene in about A.D. 300 of the saint's activity on which the Christian festival is based. Bearing in mind the Swedes' fondness for the Mediterranean one may be permitted the aside that she could not have chosen a better place.

But in spite of the Christian and Mediterranean influence on the present ceremony,

there is no doubt that Lucia is a genuine Scandinavian folk-festival. It was and still is primarily a festival of light; the longest night was thought to be over and a new year was about to begin. Until the 19th century it was the firm belief in most parts of Sweden that evil powers were especially active during this night and had to be guarded against and placated. Here we are in the supernatural world of Peer Gynt's trolls rather than the more friendly one of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. The buns which my first Lucia offered me were made with saffron in the form of a swastika with curled ends, known as "Lusse cats". Their form is traditional and may be older than Lucia herself; they may have been a symbol to keep away the Devil, who was often credited with appearing in the guise of a cat. Whatever the origin of this now completely delightful custom, one can say with certainty that modern Sweden has taken Lucia to its heart.

After Lucia comes Christmas itself. There is food to be prepared, presents to be chosen and wrapped, the Christmas tree to be brought in and the house decorated. All must be ready by December 24, for then it is that the Swedish Christmas festivities proper begin with the ringing of a bell and a long dance through the house accompanied by a song, followed by a meal of great variety and proportions.

The Swedish house decorated for Christmas is a bewildering mixture of the Christian and the pagan, of the old and the new. Wall-hangings of embroidered or painted cloth depict the story of Christmas, while in Dalecarlia the three wise men can be seen riding to Jerusalem on short stocky horses, looking for all the world like three solemn 18th-century Swedish farmers. For the children there are paper wall-hangings of *tomtar*, the Swedish version of Father Christmas, generally making merry, and in most Swedish homes these are the nearest approach to what a friend, mindful of more solid traditional delights, has called, with some disdain, a "*pappersjul*"—"a Christmas of paper".

On the other hand straw is much in evidence. Nowadays it is made to produce a most delicate and decorative effect, the designs being based on a number of traditions from the Advent star to the "Christmas goat" which was the companion of the old god Thor and later a form of the Devil. Straw has always played a part in the Swedish Christmas; the last sheaf of the harvest was brought into the house for Christmas, or made into

a figure and set up on its roof. Today in the country sheaves are put out for the birds and the Christian conception of giving has covered up the original one of assuring fertility. At one time in the country-houses the floors were covered with straw on which the family slept during the festival. There are many charming stories behind this custom, but the most striking one is that during this season the living should vacate their beds for the dead, who celebrated their Christmas too.

It is odd that in the land of Christmas-trees the Christmas-tree is comparatively recent, dating back to the last century only and coming from Germany. However, no house or public place would now be without it, and the polished red apples that hang on it hark back to yet another fertility-rite. Perhaps because of its display-value the Christmas-tree has suffered more from commercialism than any other part of Christmas, but there are still families in Sweden who would not willingly hang on it a decoration which had not been made in their own home or village. The ivy and the holly mean nothing to the Swede, but I have wiped my feet on fir-branches placed in front of the entrance to a Swedish house and made wreaths of whortleberry foliage for hanging over the dining-table. The tree had a special significance in ancient times when every Swedish farm had its "*vårdträd*" or "tree of protection" standing near the house, which assured the prosperity of its owner so long as it flourished. It is tempting to think that there may be a connection between this and the modern Christmas-tree.

I have never eaten fish prepared in so many different ways anywhere else than in Sweden, and the variations of bread and sausage are equally numerous. These, with the addition of butter and cheese, form the basis of the well-known *smörgåsbord*. They also remind us that for centuries the staple diet of the people of this northern land was fish, grain (mainly rye) and preserved meat. The older generation can still remember when the country-folk lived on salt herring, salt pork, potatoes and porridge. Perhaps we have here too an explanation of why the Swedes pay so much attention to their Christmas food, as indeed they do. Christmas becomes a feast with the appearance of a number of delicacies prepared specially for the occasion, and still, in the country at least, in the home. If the modern Swedish Christmas leads to over-eating, an aspect that can be exaggerated, it is probably true to say that



K. M. G.

Lucia Day, which falls on December 13, ushers in the Swedish Christmas season. The girl who has been chosen as Lucia wears a long white dress and a crown of lighted candles to dispel the winter darkness, for Christmas to the Swedes is a festival of light and rejoicing. Singing the "Sankta Lucia" song, with its attractive melody, she brings with her gifts of food and drink



W. Gullers

The main part of the Christmas Eve meal in Sweden consists of fish and rice-porridge. The fish—lutefisk—is dried ling which has to be soaked in lime and soda before being cooked. The little girl holds her nose because its smell is highly pungent—though its taste when cooked is delectable



K. W. C.

Christmas Eve is also known as "Dipping Day" after the custom of dipping thick slices of bread into the broth in which the Christmas ham has been boiled. Dating from Viking times, this is one of many pagan elements underlying the present Christmas festival, for the pig was sacred to Frö, Nordic god of fertility

The Christmas tree is a comparatively recent addition to the holiday trappings, having become popular only 100 years ago. Attempts have been made to derive it from "the tree of protection" which every Swedish farm possessed in ancient times

o & Feature





Photo © F

In the attic a Swedish mother helps her children to unpack the Christmas decorations, most important being the goat made of straw. The goat was believed to be the animal that pulled the chariot of the god Thor; and straw was used for sleeping on by the family, who would vacate their beds so that the ghosts might sleep in them instead at Christmas time



W. Gullers

"Do any good children live here?" asks Santa Claus as he arrives with his sack of presents on Christmas Eve. Santa Claus came to Sweden about fifty years ago, developing out of the tomte or goblin, the supernatural familiar being who usually brought good luck to the farm but had to be treated carefully (one of the best methods of keeping his good will being to set out food for him at Christmas). Nowadays he is very like our own Santa Claus, and is made just as welcome

Ablaze with candle-light, the church is crowded with people for the early morning service on Christmas Day. After the feasting and pagan elements that have gone before, and the parties and dancing that are to follow, Christianity now comes into its own for the quiet and calm of Christmas Day itself

Camera





W. Gullers

The complete Christmas cycle lasts a month, from Lucia Day on December 13 until January 13, twenty days after Christmas; although nowadays the festivities are concentrated into the days immediately around Christmas. Children take a leading part in the final celebrations, playing games, eating the gingerbread house and performing a last dance round the tree before it is stripped of its decorations and carried ceremonially outside to the accompaniment of a Christmas song

in former times it was the only season when the majority of Swedish folk ate well.

The main meal of Christmas Eve is traditionally taken in the kitchen, where the whole household eats together. The smörgåsbord, which on this day is prepared with particular care, may include sausage made from a recipe which is a close family secret, while in the centre is the Christmas ham. With the ham is served a special bread dipped in its broth. I personally have always felt this to be more of a ceremony than a delicacy and it is in fact one of the oldest traditions in the Swedish Christmas. Their Viking forefathers believed that by eating bread soaked in the fat of the pig they would take over into themselves the strength of the pig. The pig itself was the sacred animal of Frö, the Nordic god of fertility, and the ceremonial introduction and eating of the Boar's Head, as is done in Queen's College, Oxford, has been repeated many times in Swedish manor-houses on Christmas Eve.

But the main part of the meal is still to come, and it may not be surprising that this is often put off until the evening or not taken at all. Compared with the highly spiced delicacies that have gone before it is, to some, quite tasteless. Put very bluntly, it is fish and rice-pudding; admittedly both are made more piquant with a sauce and spices. The Christmas *lutfisk* is dried ling which must be soaked in lime and soda before it can be prepared for the table. This is a long, complicated and pungent process, so nowadays many people prefer to buy their *lutfisk* ready for the pot. It is obviously a custom dating from the time when Sweden was a Roman Catholic country, and stock-fish remains today an export of considerable significance from Scandinavia to the Catholic Mediterranean countries. The rice dish can be considered as a superior kind of porridge which in times gone by was the Swedes' daily food. The custom of rhyming before taking one's helping is probably falling out of use, but it was no doubt looked upon as an opportunity for expressing sentiments which would not be tolerated in plain prose.

Indeed one of the most difficult and embarrassing parts of my Swedish Christmas has been the rhyming, even when I have been allowed to do it in English, but the Swedes seem to find no difficulty in writing short and witty verses on the sealed wrappers of their presents. These are read out at their distribution, during the early evening of Christmas Eve, and cause a great deal of merriment. The Swedish word for Christmas-box is

"*julklapp*"; this means literally "Christmas knocking" and refers back to a custom far removed from the spirit of "peace and good will". A knock would be heard at the door, when it was opened an object would be thrown into the house and the giver rush off as fast as he could to avoid identification. The object might be a straw figure of Thor's goat or of an old man bearing a scurrilous message or some other form of practical joke. It is a far cry from this to the family circle sitting in a candle-lit room receiving real presents from a Father Christmas with white beard and all, but the name remains the same and there are still the verses to be written.

There is no doubt that the arrival of Father Christmas is the children's greatest delight, though it is the parents' greatest problem of stage-management. We have seen that the custom of giving presents is quite recent in Sweden; in fact Father Christmas is so new that his inventor can be named. He is not Santa Claus, he is in origin a *tomte*, one of the supernatural beings to be

The gingerbread biscuits now so popular as Christmas fare in Sweden must once have been a great luxury. Their traditional shapes include a pig, goat, cock, man, woman and heart

K. W. G.

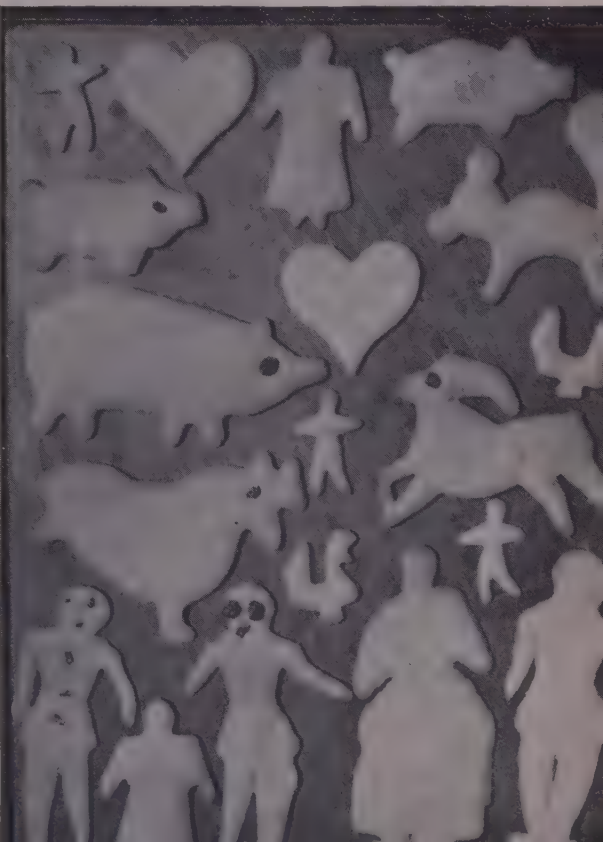




Photo & Feature

Straw, which formerly came from the last sheaf of the harvest, is much used in Swedish Christmas decorations. Here we can see the Advent star, the goat, and in the centre the 'pin' for the ham

found about the house and farmstead, who can be quite helpful, but with whom it is better at any rate to keep on good terms. It was the Swedish artist Jenny Nyström who, around 1900, gave him a visible form: a little old man with a jolly face, a long beard, a red stocking cap, red tunic and knee-breeches. He belongs to the same family of tomtar for whom a bowl of rice porridge is put outside the house during Christmas Eve. Seeing that so many Swedish houses are situated among woods it is not surprising that the children find the bowl empty the following morning.

If all this gives the impression of a lightly Christianized paganism one must remember that Christ has not yet been born and Christmas Day is still to come. For many Swedes the climax of Christmas is the early-morning service which is held about 5 o'clock in churches filled with lighted candles and at which the delightful hymn, known to every Swede, "Welcome, beautiful morning hour", is sung. In some country districts it is still the custom to drive to church in sleighs with flaring torches and a great ringing of harness-bells—to frighten away the goblins; but this has almost succumbed to the onslaught of the motor-car. The Christmas day which follows is very calm and quiet; it is not until the following day, *Staffansdag*, that the exchange

of visits, the parties and the dancing, the full social round, begin. There is still a great deal to be eaten and drunk, gingerbread biscuits, marzipan pigs, Christmas beer and mulled wine or *glögg*, one of the pleasantest drinks on a frosty night that I know.

The New Year is a colourless affair compared with what has gone before. It is if anything a continuation of Christmas; it is a 'civilized' ceremony. There is no stämning as at the early morning Christmas service or on Christmas Eve. It is as if the new year began with Lucia, and one interpretation of the Swedish *Jul* is that the word means "wheel" and signifies the beginning of the yearly cycle.

But Christmas must have an end; *Jul* must be thrown out. Even so it lasts a long time, for the decorations are kept up and the Christmas tree, with the straw goat under it, stays in the house until January 13, twenty days after Christmas and a month after Lucia. Nowadays the final ceremony is usually taken over by the children, games are played, the gingerbread house which has stood in the middle of the sweetmeat table all this time, if it has not collected too much dust, is devoured, and a last dance is performed round the tall Christmas-tree, which is then 'plundered' and carried out ceremonially, accompanied by a final Christmas song.

Chandigarh: India's Newest City

by R. M. PANJABI

World-famous foreign architects have combined boldness and originality with the imaginative use of traditional Indian methods and materials in constructing Chandigarh: they owe to Prime Minister Nehru's support their chance of making this exciting experiment in city-planning and architecture

A COMPLETELY new city—an entire city made to order—is a rare thing in history. Eminent among these is Chandigarh, on the plains of northern India. It is a city of many new and unusual features, and is designed by the most talked-about architect of our age—Le Corbusier. And so Chandigarh is of interest to all the world.

The need for a new city in India arose in 1947, when the sub-continent was partitioned into India and Pakistan. The northern province of Punjab was divided between the two nations, and Lahore, the capital of the province, went to Pakistan. The Indian Punjab was thus left without a capital, and the choice was either to upgrade one of the existing cities or to build a new one. Wisely, it was decided to build a fresh city, and to make it so good that it could be a model for the country.

At first an American architect, Albert Mayer, whom Prime Minister Nehru had known when Mayer was in India with the United States Army during the war, was asked to draw up the plans for Chandigarh. Mayer came to India to look over the site, and later sent his young colleague Matthew Nowicki for detailed study and designing. On the way back to the United States, Nowicki was tragically killed in an air-crash.

After that for various reasons—among them the dollar shortage—it was decided to employ architects from Europe. The first choice was Le Corbusier; and in December 1950 two of Punjab's top officials flew to Paris to put the proposal before him. The Frenchman's first reaction was of excitement; as whose would not be, if he had spent a lifetime thinking out new ways of making cities without the chance to put them to use?

It is no secret that Le Corbusier holds all the present-day cities in high contempt: the "bedlam and idiocy" of their traffic conditions and their "streets plunged into eternal twilight". In place of these "dislocated

organs that no longer function", he has advocated the Radiant City—his city of the future. Among other things, the Radiant City would have its population concentrated in sixty-storey towers, each set in a huge park, and the fast-moving traffic would be segregated along special, elevated roads. Le Corbusier had even worked out detailed plans for the re-creating of Paris, Algiers, Antwerp and Buenos Aires. But as yet no city had offered to try out his radical treatment.

So Chandigarh came like a chance to realize his dream; and Le Corbusier accepted it. In appearance, Chandigarh bears little resemblance to a Radiant City. Few of its buildings are higher than two storeys; and there were neither the money nor the technical resources to carry out such ideas as elevated highways. But in spite of this, as Maxwell Fry says, "the Chandigarh plan can be shown to meet the pressures of city life without destroying the delicate coherence of society, or degrading the pedestrian to the level of a hunted animal". In other words, it largely attains the aims of the Radiant City.

Le Corbusier works mostly in Paris; he visits Chandigarh for a few weeks twice a year. In India, Le Corbusier, who has a reputation for crustiness and impatience, has been saved much heart-burning because of the consistent support of Nehru. Nehru has a high regard for him and his work: almost as high, in fact, as Le Corbusier has for himself!

Recently, someone repeated to Le Corbusier what Nehru had said about him in a speech—that Le Corbusier was probably the greatest architect in the world, and how lucky they all were to have him working in India—thinking the architect would be flattered. Le Corbusier nodded vigorously: "Yes, yes," he said, "Nehru is perfectly right. I think he is the only one in India who understands me."

While Le Corbusier is responsible for the basic layout of Chandigarh and its four great Capitol buildings, the remaining buildings in

the city are the work of three other gifted foreign architects and a group of Indian architects. Of the foreigners, two are English, the husband-and-wife team of Maxwell Fry and Jane Drew. Fry and Drew were on a three-year contract, and they left at the end of this term, having designed many distinguished buildings for Chandigarh.

The other foreign architect is Pierre Jeanneret, who is a younger cousin of Le Corbusier and was for long his partner. Jeanneret continues to work in Chandigarh; unlike his cousin, he stays there almost permanently. He has also trained up some young Indian architects who are increasingly taking over the work. Jeanneret takes a great interest in rural arts and crafts, and he often visits villages near Chandigarh.

Chandigarh is about 150 miles from New Delhi, the national capital, and is set on a gently sloping plain. To its north are the foothills of the Himalayas, rising steeply to over 5000 feet and continuing endlessly in either direction. These provide an enchanting backdrop that varies in colour and depth according to the seasons and with the sunlight. "It is a big chance to have such a view", says Le Corbusier.

In its essentials the city plan is based on the

maximum segregation of living-areas from fast traffic. The whole fifteen-square-mile site is divided by a grid of straight roads into 'sectors'; these are the residential areas, and each is about three-quarters of a mile long and half a mile wide. Every sector is a complete living-unit in itself, with shops, a health-centre, a swimming-pool, banks, and nursery and middle schools and playgrounds.

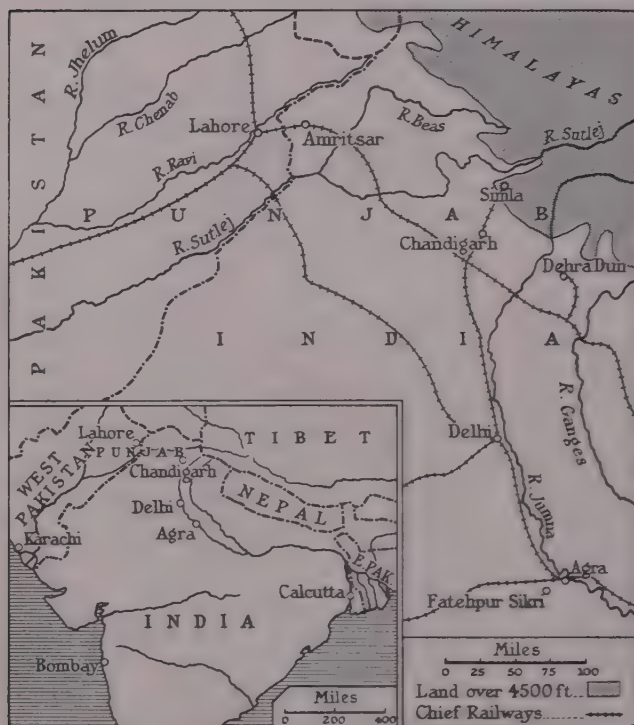
All the buildings in the sectors face inwards, and can be entered only from within the sector. To make certain of this, high walls or ditches completely enclose every sector, except at the few points where outside roads are allowed contact. Many people find these walls irksome, particularly as the traffic on the Chandigarh highways is not yet so heavy as to make their crossing hazardous. A few energetic souls have even breached the walls near their houses!

Much of the sectors is given over to parks and gardens, but not in the usual 'garden city' way of giving a small plot to every house. Here, the smaller houses are built compactly in rows of six or a dozen; and three or four rows are set around a large open space. There is also an unbroken band of park-land along the middle of every sector, and these central parks will continue from sector to sector.

Thus the effect will be of several 'green valleys' starting from the Himalayas and going down the full length of the city; and no resident will be more than a few minutes from one of them.

A part of Le Corbusier's genius is "his capacity for using creatively the fruits of cool analysis", as Maxwell Fry puts it. The novel road-system that Le Corbusier has designed for Chandigarh is the result of such a creative process. There are seven types of road, known as "the seven Vs", from the French *voie*, each having its particular function as shown by the plans reproduced opposite. The roads within the sectors are purposely designed with curves to slow down the traffic.

This system of roads is calculated to "restore to the pedestrian the dignity and peace of mind of which the modern city has deprived him", and at the same time to give to automobiles the freedom of the highways.



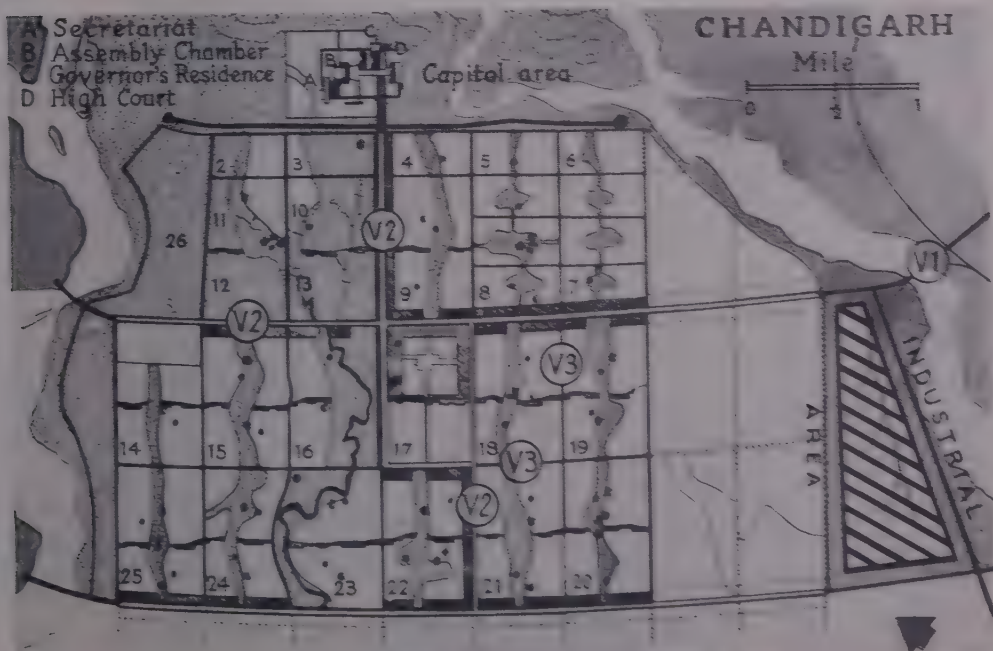
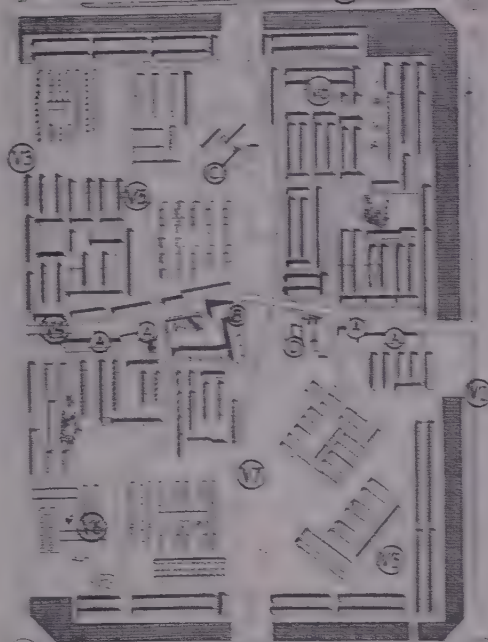
A. J. Thomson

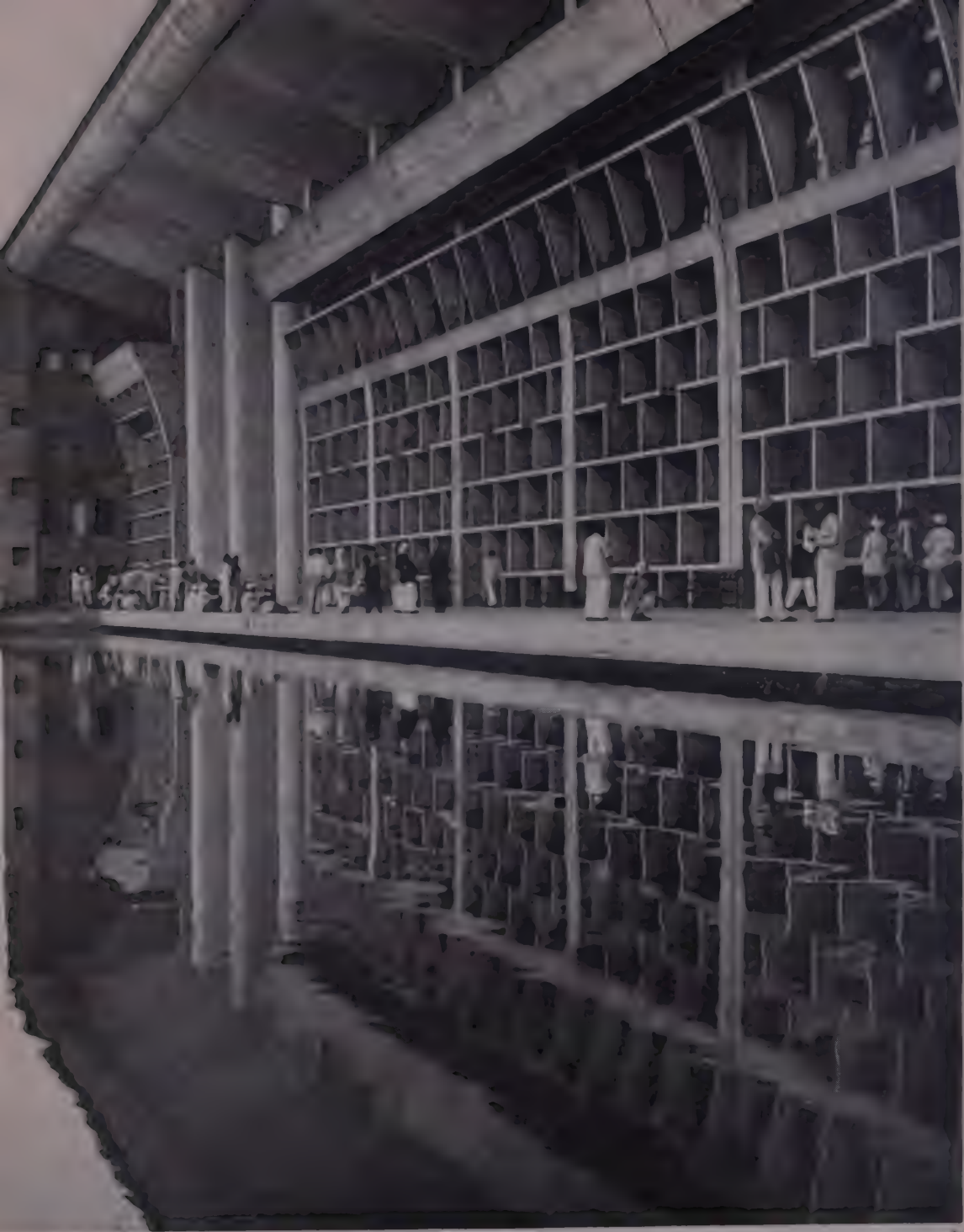
Chandigarh, an entirely new city, is being built as capital of the Indian Punjab (Lahore, the former capital of the province, having been included in Pakistan). The basic layout and the four principal buildings are the work of Le Corbusier.

(Below) The fifteen-square-mile site is divided by a grid of straight roads into residential sectors. One of the most original features of Chandigarh is the road-system, with seven clearly defined types of road: those that connect Chandigarh with other cities (V1); city throughways (V2); straight grid roads defining sectors (V3); the main street of every sector (V4); the local roads branching out from this main street and going round their sector (V5); smaller roads giving access to individual houses (V6); and foot-paths running the length of the city along the central parks of the sectors (V7).

(Right) An enlargement of Sector 22. Each sector is self-contained, with its own shops and amenities

- (S) Shops
- (C) Junior Secondary School
- (E) Cinema
- (H) Health Centre





(Above) The pool in front of the High Court at Chandigarh reflects lawyers and litigants waiting outside the court-rooms. The High Court is one of the four buildings that will compose the Capitol; the others being the Punjab Assembly Chamber, the Secretariat and the Raj Bhavan (Governor's Residence)



(Above) A distant view of the High Court, showing its unique extra roof set twenty feet above the actual building to protect it from sun and rain. Like all the buildings of the Capitol it is monumental and striking in design, being essentially a concrete box 354 feet long and 50 feet high. The 'sun-breakers' which are found on most buildings in Chandigarh in this case assume a honeycomb form. The Capitol is situated on the north-eastern side of Chandigarh; behind it stretch the foothills of the Himalayas, rising to over 5000 feet and providing a superb backdrop to the new city. The Capitol area occupies 220 acres and will be landscaped with lawns, lagoons and artificial hills. Planted with trees and flowers, these hills will help to screen and distinguish the Capitol area from the rest of the city, from which it is also separated by a canal, a promenade and a five-deep avenue of coral-trees.

(Right) One of the woollen tapestries by Le Corbusier inside the High Court. They are mainly abstract patterns of rectangles in bright colours, with one or two symbolic objects, such as the hand in this tapestry which stands for Destiny. When they were first put up in the court, some of the judges objected violently to them





(Above) The nine-storey Secretariat, the second of the Capitol buildings to be constructed. A remarkable feature of this building is its sloping ramp (within the solid, tower-like structure to the left); one of two which lead by easy gradients from ground floor to roof and serve instead of staircases. (Left) Donkeys loaded with bricks and sand use the ramp during construction. (Opposite) A hostel for legislators, designed by Pierre Jeanneret, younger cousin of Le Corbusier. They and two English architects, Maxwell Fry and Jane Drew, together with a group of Indian architects, are responsible for the design of the various buildings which form part of the general scheme

A sector in the middle of Chandigarh, Sector No. 17, will be the City Centre. There will be no houses in this sector, but only the town hall, the library and the city's biggest shops, cinemas and commercial premises. These buildings will form a cross, widening at the centre to enclose a large square which will be for pedestrians only. Motor traffic will circulate around the cross. As yet only the library and a few of the commercial buildings have been completed.

To the west of the City Centre, set out in a great area of park-land, are the cultural buildings: the college for men, the college for women, the university, the museum, the stadium and the arts school. Of these, the two colleges—both designed by the English architects—and the university have so far been completed.

The architecture of Chandigarh is modern and functional, in the best sense of these terms. The buildings have none of the

domes, minarets or other such trimmings which usually identify an Eastern setting. The city's one- and two-storey flat-roofed houses, the simple shapes of all its public buildings, and the monumental structures of the Capitol group—all these would not appear out of place in any part of the world.

The buildings are designed to respond closely to local conditions: local habits and needs, local materials and the local climate. For example, the houses have flat roofs and enclosed courtyards, because in summer the people like to sleep in the open. The buildings are mainly of brick as it is the cheapest material here. For a similar reason, Chandigarh is being built almost entirely by hand; the only machines in use being concrete-mixers, motor-trucks and a few bulldozers. In India there is need to give employment to as many people as possible; also, if complicated equipment were used it would all have to be imported.



Some of the innovations made by the architects will be appreciated, perhaps, only in the future. One relates to the omission of separate doors and staircases for sweepers to enter bathrooms. Since untouchability has been abolished by law in India, the architects logically assumed that now there could be no objection to the sweeper passing through the living-rooms. But to many people the sweeper is still "unclean"; and they talk about "the foreign architects not understanding Indian ways".

Winter is the best season in Chandigarh, with chill mornings, delightfully cool days and the sun shining from a clear blue sky. A short spring is followed by three months of summer—April to June. July and August are the monsoon months, in which the whole year's rain is concentrated. In the hot weather the temperature may rise to 115° F., and there are scorching winds.

So, to be tolerable during summer, the buildings need to be protected from the sun. The traditional practice in India is to surround them with verandas and to have the ceilings very high. During their rule, the British also followed these principles. But such methods waste space and are expensive

An essential feature of the city-plan of Chandigarh is the segregation of fast traffic from residential areas. High walls or ditches along the main roads help to achieve this

and were, therefore, unsuited to Chandigarh where economy is a primary consideration. So 'sun-breakers' were evolved.

The sun-breakers can be of many shapes: lattices of brick or concrete; areas of wall pushed back, so as to be shaded; projecting slabs around doors and windows; and, simplest of all, alternate bricks projecting out of walls. They all function by limiting the sunlight inside the buildings, much as an open Venetian blind does; or by casting patches of shade on the walls. Most sun-breakers are built at precise angles, so that while keeping out the high summer sun, they admit the sunlight in winter and in the mornings and evenings. In Le Corbusier's picturesque words: "they help to make the sun a friend instead of an enemy". Sun-breakers are used on practically every building in Chandigarh, and they serve to give the city an unusual, distinctive look.

The government houses in the city are of thirteen sizes, and are allotted to the officials according to their salaries. For each size two or three different designs have been created, and their grouping also varies from sector to sector—thus a regimented look is avoided. The biggest house is for the Chief Minister;

Type 2 is for other Cabinet Ministers; Type 3 for the highest officials; and so on to Type 13 for the lowest-paid employees, such as sweepers and messengers.

The Type 13 houses are a remarkable achievement. The budget for these was fixed at Rs 3600 (£270) per house. Yet, within this limit, the architects have managed to provide each house with two rooms, a wash-room, a kitchen, a water-closet with water-borne sewage, and an enclosed courtyard. A hundred or so such houses, in compact rows, are arranged round open spaces and enclosed by walls to give them the feeling of 'village groups'.

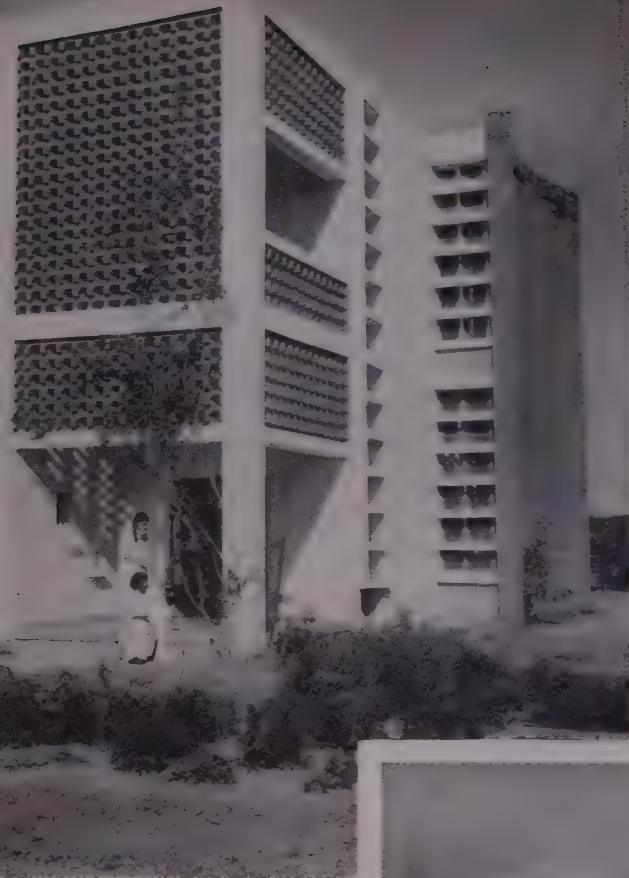
There are some 5000 government houses in Chandigarh, but more than 20,000 will be built by private owners. Land for houses is sold at Rs 12 a square yard for small plots, down to Rs 4 for the largest. Sites for commercial buildings are sold by public auction. It





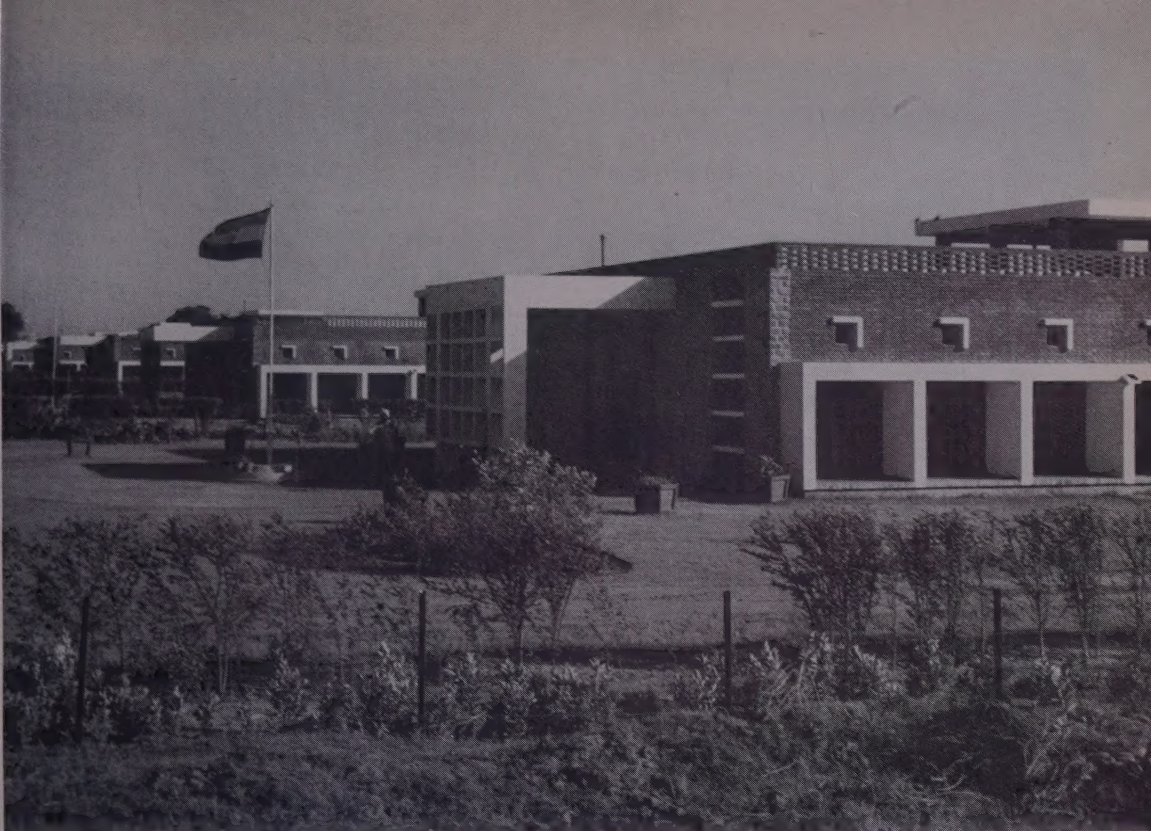
(Above) Shops in Sector 22, with residential flats above them, designed by Jane Drew. The shops are all situated on one side of the V₄ road, so that road-crossing by pedestrians is avoided as far as possible.
 (Below) Houses on the other side of the road. These are for officials earning 300-500 rupees a month





A close regard to function distinguishes the architecture no less than the planning of Chandigarh. Houses for government officials are of thirteen sizes, according to the salary of the official, with two or three different designs for each size. (Left) This one is for a senior civil servant, drawing between 1000 and 1500 rupees per month, and was designed by Jeanneret. Features characteristic of his designs include lattices of brick as sun-breakers, long windows and curved walls. Amid so many architectural innovations, one thing the architects were powerless to change was the habits of the Indian dhobis (washermen) who are accustomed to launder clothes by beating them against boulders beside some river. So they have provided enclosed yards, a plentiful supply of water and a concrete substitute for the boulders. (Below) A dhobi-ghat in Sector 15. Here a washerman is taking away a load of dried clothes. (Opposite, top) Houses for Cabinet Ministers: like most of the houses in Chandigarh they have flat roofs which can be slept on in summer. (Opposite, bottom) Those for the lowest-paid employees, though cheap, have two rooms, a wash-room, kitchen and water-closet. In this instance Jeanneret has used brick studs as sun-breakers





is expected that the money from the land will pay the entire cost of developing Chandigarh, except for the Capitol and the government houses.

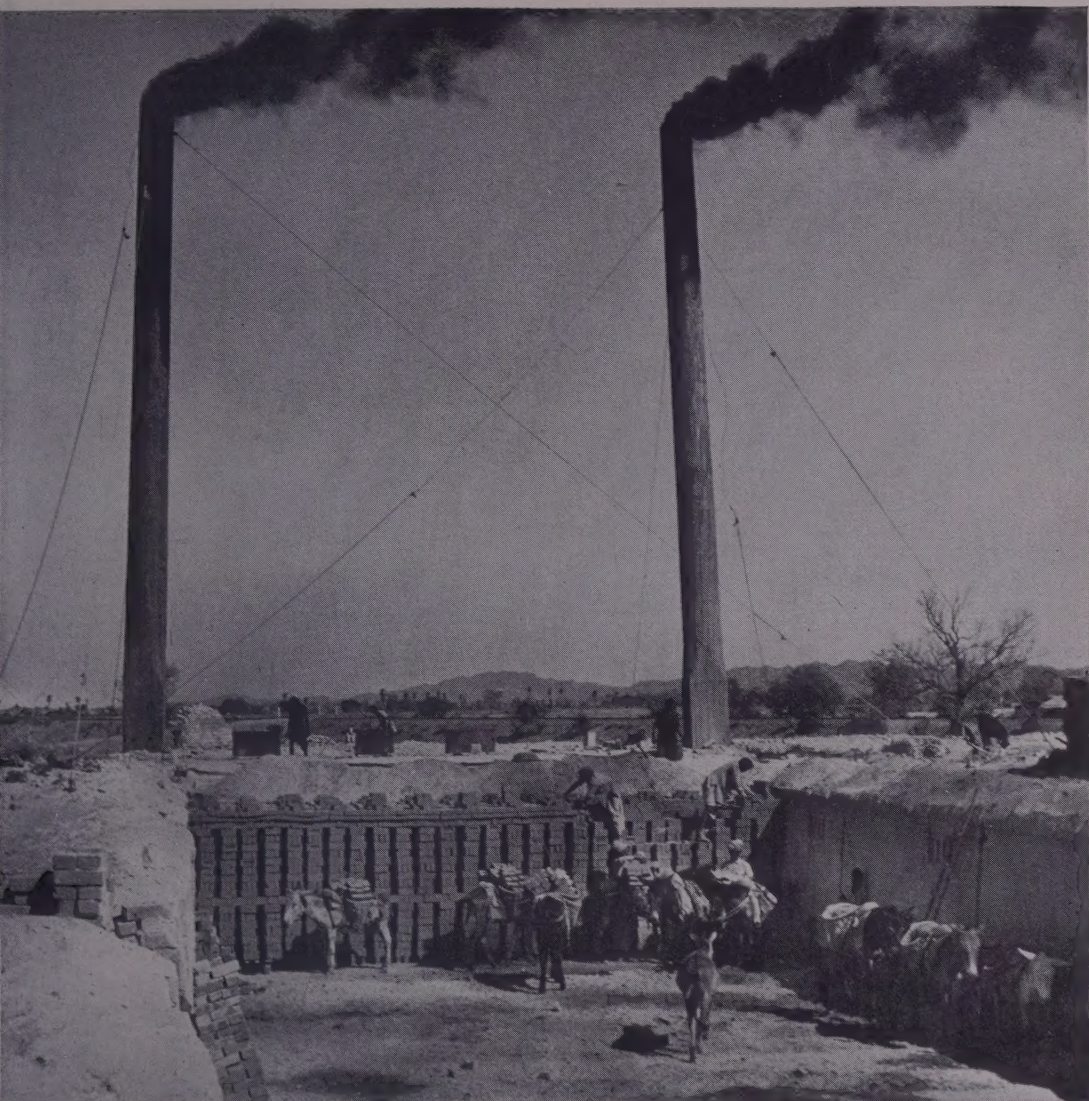
The situation regarding private construction of houses is paradoxical. All the land offered for houses is immediately taken up by the public; and the sites for shops, cinemas and offices fetch very high prices at the auctions. The government is doing everything to encourage construction. It gives liberal loans, steel and cement at low prices, and even refunds a part of the land-price if the building is completed within a year. But for various reasons the results are disappointing: the lack of opportunities for employment, inadequate rail communications, and a certain sense of insecurity because of the recent Hindu-Sikh conflict over languages. As yet, less than 2000 private houses have been built, and the population is about one-third of the 150,000 projected in the first phase; and far short of the eventual 500,000. It is even rumoured that some people who took loans

for houses in Chandigarh have gone and built them in New Delhi, where rents are much higher! How the authorities must sometimes envy Muhammad bin Tughlaq, the 14th-century king, who, when he found his new capital at Daulatabad slow in filling up, summarily ordered every man, woman, and child in Delhi to march to the new city! But now several factories are rising in the industrial area about a mile to the east of the city, to which factories and workshops are restricted; many big companies and banks are shifting their offices to Chandigarh; and a railway line is being diverted to put it on the trunk route. So the prospects for an increase in the building of private houses seem bound to improve.

To the north of Chandigarh, like a crown set on its head, is the Capitol. This magnificent group of four buildings is set on a 220-acre site, separated from the nearest housing by a canal, a promenade, and a five-deep avenue of coral-trees which every spring becomes a blaze of red. The Capitol area will be carefully landscaped with lawns and

One of the schools designed by Jeanneret, with sun-breakers at an angle calculated to keep the sun out during study-hours. For winter there are terraces where classes can be held in the open





Brick is Chandigarh's chief building-material. Sun-dried bricks are transported on donkeys and stacked in kilns for firing. There are forty such kilns spread out all around the city. Materials available have been no less important in building the city than its climatic and social needs

lagoons, artificial hills, and trees and flowers. To preserve the garden quality, the roads here will be in cuttings twelve feet deep, and traffic will be almost invisible.

The High Court and the Assembly Chamber face each other across a broad promenade on the eastern side of the rectangular Capitol area; the Governor's Residence will be set back towards the mountains; and to the west is the monumental Secre-

tariat, nine storeys high and over 800 feet long.

The High Court, completed three years ago, is a most original building. Essentially it is a concrete box 354 feet long and 50 feet high, with an all-glass façade shielded by a honeycomb of concrete sun-breakers. But this is dwarfed by the spectacular 'extra roof', held up twenty feet above the real roof on a series of uprights, in the manner of a giant umbrella to prevent the sun and rain



Le Corbusier, the master-architect of Chandigarh, explaining his ideas to Mr Nehru, the Prime Minister of India, whose admiration and continued support has largely helped Corbusier in carrying out his plans for the city. Corbusier works mostly in Paris but visits Chandigarh twice a year

from touching the building proper.

The canopy roof of the Assembly Chamber will be on the same principle as that of the High Court, but otherwise this building also is an original and lively creation. Work on the Assembly Chamber started early this year.

A unique feature of the long, slab-like Secretariat is its two ramps, in front and at the back of the building. In the ramps are zig-zagging slopes along which one can walk up to the roof. The ramps are easier and less tiring than staircases, and are an immense convenience, as there are only a few lifts in the building.

From outside, the Governor's Residence will appear a pile of square concrete blocks. The 130-foot base block will be for receptions and ceremonies, above that two smaller blocks for offices, on top of these the Governor's house, and floating above all a fairy-land roof-garden.

Le Corbusier believes in the beauty of "brute concrete", and so leaves the outer

surfaces of all his buildings unfinished and with the imprints of the building-boards visible on the concrete. But he brightens up his structures by a startling use of colour. In the High Court there are panels and niches of brilliant primary colours scattered all over the façade; and in the Secretariat the walls behind the sun-breakers are in a different colour for each storey, ranging from white through yellow, orange and red to a jet black.

East of the Capitol a river has been blocked to create an artificial lake, about a square mile in area. Apart from adding beauty to the city and providing boating and recreation, this water will irrigate all the parks, trees and flowering plants that will soon transform Chandigarh into a 'green city'.

So this is Chandigarh: a dream come true—for Le Corbusier, and for India. Now, in its growing reality, it will inspire and be an example for other cities, in India and throughout the world.